

# THE SPEAKER

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1892.

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

THE "dead set" which the Tory party is now making at Mr. JUSTICE MATHEW furnishes melancholy evidence of the depth of degradation to which LORD SALISBURY and his allies have sunk. The furious disregard for truth, for fair-play, and for decency which at times seems to take possession of persons of a certain class, shows to what desperate straits the Coercionists have been driven by their defeat at the General Election. MR. JUSTICE MATHEW is for the moment the object of popular hatred, and he is being treated very much as THE SPEAKER was treated a few months ago for telling the truth about the DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE. The rabid calumnies which are now being launched against him by the speakers and journalists who represent "the classes" are devoid even of a shadow of foundation, and are merely inspired by the frenzied hatred which these persons feel for everybody who dares to oppose their Irish policy. The latest and most disgraceful example of the lengths to which these people are prepared to go is furnished by the DUKE OF ARGYLL—a person who habitually uses language which is strong enough to attract attention if it were uttered on Clerkenwell Green. The Duke, following LORD SALISBURY, but going further even than he did, declares SIR JAMES MATHEW'S conduct to have been "scandalous—a travesty not only of justice but even of everything in the nature of common fairness." The Duke, in saying this, has used the words which most accurately describe his own conduct. Liberals who may possibly be deafened by the clamour raised by the chorus of calumniators will, we hope, remember that there is not a jot or tittle of evidence to support the wicked and malicious libels which LORD SALISBURY, the DUKE OF ARGYLL, and the rest of the landlord band have seen fit to pour upon a judge whose great qualities are recognised as freely by his enemies as his friends. The whole outcry is part of an organised conspiracy to defeat the Commission which seeks to do justice between landlord and tenant in Ireland.

THE Commission has been collecting important evidence during the week; but it has done so without assistance from the landlords. MR. SMITH-BARRY has distinctly declined to attend its meetings, or give evidence before it, or in any way assist it in the investigations in which it is engaged. MR. SMITH-BARRY, we need hardly say, is the bell-wether of the landlord flock in Ireland, and his colleagues will follow his example. It is quite unnecessary to dilate on this proceeding. All that need be said is that when MR. PARNELL and his friends withdrew from the Special Commission, the Tory Press was unanimous in declaring that this step on their part was proof of a guilty conscience. But MR. PARNELL and the other Irish members had, before retiring, submitted themselves freely to examination and cross-examination. MR. SMITH-BARRY, LORD CLANRICARDE, and the other Irish landlords, fly from the Commission the moment the doors are opened. They may merely be actuated by a desire to show their contempt for "law and order" when law and order happen to be guarded by a Liberal Administration; but they must not be surprised if the same judgment is passed upon them which was passed upon MR. PARNELL and his

colleagues when they retired from JUDGE HANNEN'S Court. At all events, they will have no right to look for English sympathy if the verdict of the Commissioners should be adverse to them.

THE petitioners against MR. BALFOUR at Manchester have signally failed to connect that gentleman with their allegations of illegal conduct at the late election, and his return accordingly stands good. We cannot, of course, express any opinion regarding the Wallsall case, which has not, at the moment at which we write, been decided; but we trust that our readers will not fail to take due note of the stories told before the different Commissions. Whether there has or has not been bribery and corruption, it is at least clear that a great deal still remains to be done in order to make elections in England what they ought to be, and one reform at all events is clearly indicated as necessary—the closing of every public-house whilst an election is taking place.

WE trust that our readers of all parties will not neglect the appeal made to them on behalf of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. The admirable speech of MR. ASQUITH at the meeting held on Wednesday on behalf of the Society set the case for it before the country in the clearest and strongest light. Too often it is only a doubtful assent which many of us are able to give to the work of philanthropic associations—not because there is any doubt as to the purity of intention of their promoters, but because wise and generous aspirations are sometimes carried to a dangerous point. But this danger, at all events, does not exist in the case of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. The researches of the officers of that society have brought home to us the appalling fact that thousands of English children are at this moment living in something worse than a state of slavery—at the mercy of parents in whom the milk of human kindness seems to have been turned to gall, and who habitually treat their helpless infants with a cruelty which they dare not exercise towards the dumb creation. We trust that MR. ASQUITH'S speech foreshadows an attempt to amend the law on this question, and to give children a more effectual protection than they enjoy at present.

THE Imperial Federation League has taken LORD SALISBURY'S advice, and formulated a plan. There is to be a representative body for the Empire, consisting of members appointed by the self-governing Colonies, and of the Secretaries of State for the Colonies and India (and possibly other persons), as representing the Crown Colonies and the Indian Empire respectively. Its members will consult with the Ministry, and—proper information being supplied if necessary on foreign politics, we presume in confidence—it will deal with the appointment of the money available for Imperial defence. Part of this money is to be raised by the various self-governing Colonies; the method of raising it being, in the first instance, left to the Colonies themselves. But it is strongly recommended that before anything is done a conference of representatives of the Colonies shall be summoned by the Imperial Government. The scheme; it will be noticed, does not practically touch the omnipotence

of Parliament, and is not open to the objection that English interests may be overborne by those of the Colonies, because the sphere of action of the new body is so extremely limited. We doubt whether it will satisfy the extreme Imperialists, while it may offend those extreme colonists whose local patriotism overpowers their Imperial feeling. Most people, however, will find it unexceptionable.

THE report of the Committee suggests various obvious but hitherto unadopted methods for promoting the unity of the Empire, such as the raising of local loans for Imperial purposes under an Imperial guarantee; more uniformity in commercial law; the admission of Colonial Government stocks to the rank of trustee stocks (only then the colonists must look to their Labour Parties), and of colonists to the Civil Service and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council; uniform postage throughout the Empire; and Free Trade, unaccompanied, it is to be hoped, by Protection against the foreigner. It is by these measures, and by celebrations like that in St. Paul's on Tuesday) that the Imperial colours, to adopt LORD ROSEBERY'S happy metaphor, can be most securely "nailed to the pole." We may differ from the views of Canadian politics entertained by the late SIR JOHN MACDONALD; but we can all concur in celebrating his memory if he is taken as a type of Imperial patriotism.

PUTTING aside the Trafalgar Square demonstration of Sunday—which was orderly enough, and well conducted on the whole, despite some silly language from one or two speakers—we have had some important contributions this week towards a solution of the ever-recurrent problems of pauperism. The excellent circular of the Local Government Board, with its suggestions as to relief works, goes as far in this direction as sound knowledge will probably take us at present. We are promised a Royal Commission on the Poor Law and Old-Age Pensions—which seems hardly likely to satisfy the advanced reformers. MR. CHARLES BOOTH'S admirable presidential address at the Statistical Society on Tuesday propounded a plan for dealing with the dockers' problem by limiting the numbers of the 22,000 men now struggling for the work which only suffices for an average of 16,000, by a better organisation of labour, involving the establishment of district agencies with preferential lists of men to be employed, and an arrangement for shifting surplus labour rapidly from one agency to another. The scheme looks eminently practicable—so far as outsiders can judge—but it seems likely to add five or six thousand casual labourers to the mass of the permanently unemployed. Finally, MR. TOM MANN and MR. SIDNEY WEBB have given their views at great length before the entire body of the Labour Commission. MR. WEBB dealt with the municipalisation of industry—past and future—and the Eight Hours Bill; and seemed to contemplate with pleasure the benevolent despotism of a Labour Minister. MR. TOM MANN'S evidence has been interesting, but has afforded a new illustration of the old truth that there is no dreamer so fantastic as the practical man of undoubted ability when once he gets away from the facts he knows.

As the Russian Government has not again withdrawn gold, the rates of interest and discount are falling away in the open market. The latter is now no better than  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. It is very unwise on the part of the joint stock banks, and it is more than unwise on the part of the Bank of England; for at any moment the Russian withdrawals may recommence, and in any case it is known that immense sums will have to be borrowed by Governments during the next twelve months. The Austro-Hungarian Government ever since May last has been

negotiating with the ROTHSCHILD group of bankers for a gold loan of over twenty millions sterling. The Russian Government ever since the breakdown of its loan in Paris a year ago has been negotiating both in France and Germany for a loan of a similar amount. Next month the Spanish Cortes is to be called together to authorise a loan, also of twenty millions sterling, it is said. Bulgaria has concluded arrangements for a loan of about six millions sterling, Turkey is about to borrow a couple of millions sterling, Roumania and Servia both want money, Italy is in dire straits, and somehow or other must get large advances. There will be a large French deficit, and France besides is spending lavishly upon her army, her navy, and public works. France, of course, will borrow in some shape or other. Both Prussia and Germany are about to borrow. Chili raised over a million and three quarters sterling the other day, and is about to raise another million and a quarter sterling. Uruguay would borrow if anybody would lend; India will have to borrow, so will the Colonies. Altogether, therefore, it is certainly under the mark to say that during the next twelve months the Governments of the world will try to borrow in some shape or other from 100 to 120 millions sterling. And however the money is scraped together, or wherever it is advanced, there are sure to be demands upon London for gold to carry out the operations. It may be, of course, that the exports of the metal from New York will begin again early next year. But the silver crisis grows more threatening every week that passes; and if it should burst upon us, nobody can say what its effects upon the money markets of the world may be. The price of silver is 38½d. per ounce. The market is weak, and a further fall apparently cannot be long delayed.

THE stock markets have been more cheerful this week than for a long time past. The boom in South African shares so long predicted seems to have really begun, and there is a reckless speculation in South American securities. The price of Uruguayan bonds, for instance, has been run up almost to 40, and a syndicate has bid for the large quantity of Uruguayan bonds left upon the hands of MESSRS. BARING BROS. at the time of the crash. The bid, however, was rejected by the Bank of England. It is to be hoped that the investing public will not be beguiled by Stock Exchange blandishments, for the speculation must break down before very long. We point out in another column that the change of Government in the United States, with the financial reforms it involves, is likely to have a depressing effect upon the markets for commodities as well as for securities; and further, there is danger of a break up of the combination brought about amongst the railways that serve New York by MESSRS. DREXEL MORGAN, and the VANDERBILTS. MESSRS. DREXEL MORGAN until the other day were the voting trustees of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company, and therefore controlled its management. The Trust has now come to an end, and the first use the shareholders are making of their liberty is to run amuck against the New York Central. MESSRS. DREXEL MORGAN, being interested in both companies, may be powerful enough to compel them to keep peace; if not, the Vanderbilts are sure to retaliate. Then, again, if a railway war of rates breaks out, and fear of Democratic legislation grows keener amongst manufacturers and railway managers, it is quite possible that the silver crisis may be precipitated. At home trade is very bad, and we fear will grow worse. Upon the Continent the Governments are arming breathlessly against one another, and half the states are either bankrupt, or rushing headlong to bankruptcy. The Far East is suffering from the consequences of the silver crisis, and Australasia has not yet recovered. It will be seen, therefore, that the time is most unfavourable for a Stock Exchange gamble.



## LIBERAL ADMINISTRATION.

THE hostile critics of the present Administration are somewhat embarrassed in choosing their line of attack. They always contradict each other, and usually contradict themselves. But, on the whole, their favourite argument appears to be that the Government is a bad one because everything it does is wrong, and that everything the Government does is right because it imitates the conduct of its predecessor. Both these propositions cannot, if there is such a thing as logic, be true. But they may both be false, and we think they are so. No doubt there are occasions when Ministers have done what their present opponents did. Liberals do not believe of Lord Salisbury as Tories seem to believe of Mr. Gladstone, that two and two no longer make four if he says they do. Mr. Fowler, in his circular letter to the Boards of Guardians on the subject of the prevailing distress, very sensibly quoted from a similar composition six and a-half years old, of which Mr. Chamberlain, just before he left the Liberal party, was the author. The announcement that he is about to form a Commission to inquire into the relief of the aged poor shows that he is prepared to act where Mr. Chamberlain and his friends have only talked. Lord Kimberley, in receiving the deputation which mildly suggested that the Indian Government should abandon the revenue raised from opium, and see what would happen to the finances of India, said what Lord Cross would have said, but said it with much greater clearness and vigour. It is not because the Liberals are in and the Tories are out that the Indian taxpayer becomes wealthy, or that opium becomes a poison. But it is altogether erroneous to suppose that, when Parliament does not happen to be sitting, a Liberal Government acts like a Tory one. Even the enemy cannot bring this charge against Mr. John Morley, who has repealed Coercion as far as he could repeal it, and has won the confidence of the Irish people by inquiring into the grievances of the evicted tenants. Nor can they say it of the Home Secretary as supreme head of the Metropolitan Police. Mr. Matthews, a very clever and ingenious, but an impulsive and wrong-headed man, could see no halfway-house between closing Trafalgar Square to public meetings and letting half-a-dozen crowds fight for precedence at any hour of the day or night. By the simple application of a little common sense—that most uncommon quality, as somebody called it—Mr. Asquith has solved the difficulty to the satisfaction of everyone except a few rampant Socialists and a few nervous tradesmen. Last Sunday the square was filled with Radical contingents from almost every part of London, and with groups of the unemployed. There was no disturbance whatever, and not much noise. Nobody was hurt, nobody was frightened, nobody, except from a casual pickpocket, was a penny the worse. Yet the occasion was a special one, being the anniversary of the struggle for the Square in 1887, and the assemblage exceptionally large in consequence! This shows the beneficial result of what Sydney Smith called taking the bearing-rein off the English people. Mr. Asquith accepted the law as laid down five years since by Mr. Justice Charles. But he interpreted the discretion vested in the Executive like a sound Liberal, and thus removed a feeling of irritation against the police which had long existed, and had produced infinite mischief.

But that is not the only change in the administration of the Home Office. By the Factory Act of 1891 "the occupier of every factory and workshop . . . and every contractor employed by any such occupier in the business of the factory or workshop"

may be required by the Secretary of State to keep a list of all persons in his employment, and of the place where they are employed, as if they were working in the shop itself. This is a provision of the utmost importance to the health and happiness of the working classes. Mr. Matthews resisted it in the House of Commons, and virtually refused to carry it out when it became law. Mr. Asquith has supplied the omission, and in a large number of specified trades the jurisdiction of the inspector will be extended from the factory to the home. That this great and salutary change, which was demanded by almost every social reformer acquainted with the subject, has not excited more general interest is due to the stupid pedantry of the public service. It being manifestly for the interest of the community that Mr. Asquith's order should be widely and generally known, the document embodying the order was inserted in the *London Gazette*, among formal and insignificant notices, but carefully withheld from every newspaper which anybody reads. But Mr. Asquith has at least done something to redeem the Home Office from the reputation of utter indifference to the wishes and interests of the working classes. Mr. Acland is equally active at the Education Office. When the Tories had carried free education they were rather ashamed of it. Mr. Acland has announced that, where there is any desire for gratuitous teaching, it must—not may—be supplied, and that every citizen has the right of applying for it to the Education Department direct. This is a policy entirely different from the course taken by Lord Cranbrook and his not very well-educated subordinate, who were always trying to whittle down the measure described by Mr. Goschen, before he adopted it, as a universal concession to Socialism. The Lord Chancellor cannot very well remove from the magisterial bench the horde of incompetent Tories with which Lord Halsbury stuffed it; but he can at least endeavour to restore something like impartiality by appointing men who, whatever their politics, enjoy the confidence of their neighbours, and that he has been freely doing. The country already feels the beneficial results of the General Election, and the worst fault Ministers could commit would be to shrink from the duty of translating their principles into action.

## PRINCE BISMARCK'S CONFESSION.

A NEW Hogarth seems to be needed to paint for us the successive scenes in a drama which might fittingly be called "The Statesman's Fall." Week by week Prince Bismarck would furnish such an artist with the materials for a fresh scene; but never surely has he provided a more dramatic theme for the satirist and his own enemies than that which we have owed him within the last few days. Who is the greatest criminal of this generation? Not most assuredly the pitiful wretch who expiated his offences in Newgate the other day, vile though he was in every aspect. The really colossal criminal works not by his own hands but by those of others, and sets in motion the train of consequences by which the fortunes not of individuals only but of nations are affected. If, for example, we could point to any one man and say that he and he alone caused that terrible convulsion which moved the whole world two-and-twenty years ago, robbed two great nations of the flower of their manhood, inflicted misery incalculable upon millions of human beings, and left one State ground into the dust and the other burdened beyond endurance by the weight of its armaments, no person would hesitate in saying

that such a man was a sinner above all others. We do not say that Prince Bismarck has established his claim to this hateful pre-eminence in evil doing; but he seems anxious to secure it for himself, and the latest revelations with which he has favoured us, revelations which reflect, unlike those of Titus Oates, almost solely upon his own character and conduct, go far to show that he was in heart at least capable of the astounding wickedness at which we have glanced.

Most of us still remember the fateful July of 1870—the month which opened amid so dead a calm and closed in the convulsions of a world-wide earthquake. We can recall the first ill-omened candidature of the Hohenzollern Prince for the throne of Spain; the anger and indignation of the French at the thought that a Teuton was to be the chief power in the Iberian Peninsula; the doubts and fears that prevailed in every European capital; and the intense relief which was universally felt when it was made known that the King of Prussia had been wise enough and magnanimous enough to take away from the French the *casus belli* which they seemed to have established against Germany. And who can have forgotten the incredulity, amounting almost to horror, with which, a day or two later, the world learned that this great concession on the part of King William had not sufficed to avert the dreaded catastrophe, and that Europe was about to be plunged once again into a great struggle between two of its foremost Powers? Loud and bitter in those days were the accusations freely levelled against the French for their wicked and foolhardy obstinacy in demanding terms not merely of concession, but of humiliation from Prussia. It is true that even then there were some who did not shut their eyes to certain strange features of the case which seemed to suggest that, deep as the sinning of the French Emperor might be, he had himself been cruelly sinned against. A few months later, when the terrible war was running its course, Sir Arthur Otway, referring to a statement made as to the responsibility of the French for the beginning of the war by Mr. Forster, was courageous enough to state in public that the full truth had not yet been revealed, and that the responsibility possibly lay in a different quarter from that to which it had hitherto been attached. But though shrewd men who were behind the scenes in European affairs at that time were unable to reconcile the professions of a desire for peace on the part of Prussian statesmen with some of their actions, the world at large believed that it was France, and France alone, that had plunged into the red ruin of war. And now Prince Bismarck comes forward, and for some reason hardly to be guessed either by his greatest admirers or his greatest foes, boldly proclaims the fact long suspected by the initiated, that he, of his own deliberate action, provoked the great struggle by a gratuitous alteration in the despatch from the King which led France to draw the sword. He wanted war; he was determined to have it; he believed the moment to be that when war could be made under the most favourable auspices for Germany, and so he made it. And now he claims the gratitude of his countrymen for having thus steered the ship of the State into the heart of the storm.

It is a story absolutely revolting and almost, though unfortunately not quite, incredible. What is to be said of the man who thus gratuitously takes upon himself a burden of responsibility from which the most hardened of criminals might well fly in terror? We do not pretend to know. All that can be said is that Prince Bismarck's fall from the high estate he occupied but recently is in every respect greater and more fatal than that of any other man in the long roll of history who has held a position

akin to his. We give him full credit for having acted from patriotic motives, though when we remember how mixed patriotic motives usually are, even in the breasts of the purest of statesmen, how many cross currents enter into those motives, how easily personal aims and desires take upon themselves the guise of statesmanlike foresight and prudence, we cannot pretend to say that mere patriotism can ever excuse an act like this. But when we remember the incalculable cost of the step which Bismarck took, the cost not merely in precious life and human happiness and security during the period of the war, but in the loss of the sense of peace and the wise economy which accompanies it ever since, we shrink aghast from this last and worst revelation which the ex-Chancellor has made with regard to his own conduct when he stood at the head of the State. The historian will doubtless be able to do full justice to the tardy confession of a fact which Prince Bismarck has so often denied. For his contemporaries it can only seem that he stands convicted by his own admission of having committed an unpardonable sin, and proves that not merely for the waste of human life which Europe had to witness aghast and helpless in 1870, but for the waste of treasure which still goes on in an ever-widening stream, and which threatens to bring about a catastrophe not less terrible than that of the war itself, he is the man who stands responsible before God and his fellow-countrymen. Nor can Prince Bismarck's bitterest foes desire to send him to his last account with a greater burden lying upon his soul than this.

#### LEAR IN REAL LIFE.

IT is difficult to believe that the French Government are serious in their intention to prosecute M. de Lesseps for his share in the ruinous collapse of the Panama Canal scheme. Apart from every other consideration, the futility of the proceeding ought alone to make it impossible. It is hardly possible to imagine that a French jury could ever screw itself up to the point of pronouncing a verdict of "guilty" against the one grand old man of whom France can now boast. And even if M. de Lesseps were not one of the recognised glories of his country, his mere age might well be expected to protect him from the reach of the criminal law. We believe, therefore, that the projected trial will never take place, and we cannot but regard the fact that it has been contemplated as a fresh proof of the weakness of the present Cabinet.

Still, even though M. de Lesseps should escape the dock and the invective of the Public Prosecutor, the tragical character of his fate will remain almost without parallel in modern times. True, we in this country had a George Hudson, and there are not a few still living who can recall both Hudson's days of glory at Albert Gate, when all London was at his feet, and his subsequent years of exile and want. But Hudson's case differed materially from that of M. de Lesseps. His period of prosperity was as brief as it was sudden, and though we do not wish to deny the real services that he rendered in the development of the railway system, no one will pretend to compare his work with that of De Lesseps. The latter has spent a long life of work, honour, and success. Though his early struggles were severe, the very greatness of the object at which he aimed inspired him with hope and confidence; and when once that object had been attained, he found himself the subject of an idolatry on the part of his fellow-countrymen that was by no means vulgar in its character. He was "the great Frenchman," the man who had secured for France the glory of having



united the East and the West, and who, in carrying out his beneficent design, had successfully overcome even the opposition of a Palmerston. That he had brought fortune to thousands of Frenchmen, and had given an enormous impetus to the commerce of the world, seemed, in the eyes of our neighbours, to be small things compared with this great achievement for the honour and glory of France.

Thus De Lesseps has stood for more than a score of years upon a pedestal of fame which seemed to be no less secure than lofty. In him, at all events, all political parties saw one whom they could honour. He was, above everything else, the man who united sorely divided France in the bond formed by a common sentiment—a universal and passionate admiration. And to-day he lies so low that a Cabinet talks of prosecuting him, and within sight of his ninetieth year he is called upon to prepare himself for the dock and the gaol. Can the woes of Lear himself have been more terrible in their intensity than those which now bow down the white head of the old Frenchman? And, to add to the irony of the situation in which fate has thus seen fit to involve him, it is to be remembered that no man even pretends to call in question the perfect honesty of De Lesseps himself. Thousands may have been deceived by the brilliant phantasm of the Panama Canal scheme; but he himself, as it has been well said, was the first and greatest of the dupes. Nor is the pity of the thing in any degree diminished by the fact that he was self-deceived, the victim of his own optimism. For without that optimism which has now brought him to his ruin, M. de Lesseps could never have achieved the splendid triumph which will always be associated with his name, and by which the world has benefited so greatly. Without it, he could never have successfully overcome the resistance of Lord Palmerston and other great potentates to the formation of the Suez Canal. Without it, he could never have enlisted the sympathy of the old Khedive, or won his battle against Oriental apathy and the stubborn desert sands. It is a hard saying indeed that a man should fall by reason of the very greatness of his qualities; and yet this is not the only instance which the history of the world affords of such a case. We do not for a moment question the fact that great abuses have been committed in connection with the financing of the abortive Panama scheme, nor is it possible to deny that the weight of practical and scientific authority has from the first been dead against the practicableness of that scheme. It has cost we know not how many millions of money or how many thousands of human lives, and it has ended in failure sheer and absolute. All this will, doubtless, be brought against De Lesseps now, and quite naturally and reasonably; but the very greatness of the catastrophe in which he is involved in his fall is in itself the outcome of his own personal greatness. It is only the giant oak which in its fall lays desolate half a forest. And Frenchmen, when they think of De Lesseps in his hour of failure and humiliation, will, we trust, remember that the very causes which have led up to ruin and disaster in this case brought victory to himself and wealth and glory to France, in connection with the one imperishable achievement of his life.

#### ANARCHISM IN FRANCE.

THE French papers for the past fortnight have been a curious and characteristic spectacle. Paris is supposed to be in the throes of a dynamite scare; and not without good reason: six men killed

and a police barrack blown up by a terrific infernal machine, and that upon the heels of several similar attempts for which a desperate Anarchist had just been executed, is a record which we in London amid the worst of our scares never approached. Yet almost the commonest features in the Parisian newspapers at the moment are interviews with leading Anarchists openly glorying in these exploits. No paper appears to think it has done its duty until one of its staff, with all the grace of a Parisian reporter, has interviewed one of these interesting gentlemen, who, on his part, delights in the opportunity of thus advertising his sanguinary views. These conversations are varied by the reports of public meetings, held under the protection of the police, at which Anarchist orators proclaim the explosion of the Rue des Bons Enfants a blow struck by their "*compagnons*" in the Social Revolution, and incite to the continuance of the good work, denouncing by name officials, capitalists, and corporations whom they deem it desirable to destroy. The late Ravachol is held up as the apostle and proto-martyr of this "*propagande par le fait*." A society has been formed, the papers tell us, with the cryptic symbol "A. D. R." (meaning *Amis de Ravachol*) for its cognisance; and we read of a soldier stepping out of the ranks and knocking down his officer with the cry of "Hurrah for Ravachol and the Social Revolution!" The tone of the Parisian press towards these phenomena recalls old times. Except by one or two of the graver journals the whole thing is treated as something highly interesting and even amusing, with just a spice of danger about it to give it an extra relish. Anarchism, in fact, is the craze rather than the scare of the moment; and we shall not be surprised to hear of models of bombs and infernal machines soon becoming the fashionable trinkets, like the little guillotines of the Incroyables. One is reminded of the *sang-froid* and levity of the boulevards in 1871 while Communists and Versaillais were in death-grips at the fortifications. In the midst of all this M. Loubet the Premier, most amiable and comfortable of bourgeois, with a Panama prosecution waiting for him if he gets over the Press Law debate, rides for a fall with all his might, thinking only of escaping from such a sinister hurly-burly into the bosom of his alarmed family. To those who can read signs, these various matters, taken together, afford a very illuminative picture of the state of France at the present juncture.

M. Loubet's anxiety to escape from his post is an even better indication of the secret of his difficulties with the Anarchists than his complaint of insufficient powers. He, good man, by his timidity and flabbiness, conspicuously exhibited in the matter of the Carmaux strike, has done more to give the Anarchists a boom than any individual since Ravachol. The helplessness of his Executive in face of the open exploitation of Anarchism that has been going on since the explosion is a positive invitation to disorder. It is high time, for the sake of the Republic, whatever else be the outcome of the week's crisis, that a stronger man took his place. The situation is more critical than might appear. It is just possible that Anarchism has now become a serious menace to the Republic. Movements of this kind can never be spoken of with certainty in France. It is not the first time Paris has been threatened in an exactly similar way, for Anarchism is but a new name for an old thing; in 1848 it was Socialism and the agitation for the *droit au travail*, in 1871 it was the Commune. The only difference is that the sentiment from which these movements sprang, the longing for the "Social Revolution," has since grown stronger and has spread through all the world. In other countries, as well as in France, the

great thought in all men's minds to-day is the emancipation and regeneration of those who toil. But in other countries men are content to proceed by steady degrees, by tentative experiments, by Royal Commissions, at which the preachers of the new evangel give their evidence, swap opinions with their opponents, and submit their theories to the test of sober criticism; whereas the mode of France has ever been different. To the French mind, with its weakness for logic and abstract ideas, and its consequent impatience for results, revolutions seem to be a periodic necessity; and it is quite possible that, while we are accomplishing our social transformation by means of a few General Elections, France may not accomplish hers without some resort to the methods by which she evolved herself from feudalism with the rest of the world a hundred years ago. At any rate, the Anarchists are not to be despised. They have now at their back an amount of proletarian disenchantment with bourgeois domination hardly less than there existed at the fall of the Empire. "The Republic has now been established over twenty years," said an Anarchist workman to one of the interviewers, "and what has it done for the great mass of those who suffer? What progress in this sense has there been from one session to another? from one Chamber to another? Universal suffrage, as they practise it, is a delusion. It has not given us a single advocate. Now we have made dynamite speak for us. That makes more noise than an orator. That will make the bourgeoisie examine their consciences." In a word, the proletariat has begun again to grow bitterly impatient of the "bourgeois Republic" which is so slow about introducing the millennium. The sneer of one of the prominent Communists of 1871 exactly expresses the Anarchist feeling of to-day. MM. Grévy and Favre, he said, wanted to make France "a good little Republic, directed by good bourgeois, introducing generously and by degrees little ameliorations into the lot of the working men, while making them understand that it was impossible to give them everything at once, and that Paris was not built in a day." The one fundamental difference between Communists and Anarchists renders the latter really more formidable enemies of society. The Communists had a pretty definite theory as to what they meant to substitute for the old order, and this always laid them open to disillusion and discomfiture. The Anarchists have no theories and no illusions. Their one dream is to destroy society as it exists, and to keep it destroyed. Beyond that all is vague. Each man is to do as he pleases. There will be no organisation of society, no laws. "We shall not lose our time in assembling to talk of such things," said the Anarchist above quoted. "It is because we wish to remain men of action that we will not come together." Some of the more mystical spirits have dreams of a reign of universal love among men as soon as property is abolished and the written law is no more—the old dreams, in fact, of the Contrat Social, which Robespierre laboured so hard to realise. But the average Anarchist does not care; he has appetites rather than dreams.

It is unfortunate that at a moment when these men have been gaining a certain amount of terrorist prestige the Ministry should be involved in such a situation as it is this week. As we go to press the fate of M. Loubet remains undetermined, but it seems pretty certain that either over the Press laws, or the Panama prosecution, or the Swiss Convention, his Cabinet will go down. Let us hope, at least, that the shuffle of the cards may result in the appointment of a vigorous administrator who will lose no time in making it clear that the Government

of the Republic is well able to deal with its enemies and to protect society.

#### THE IRISH NATIONAL CONVENTION.

THE great Convention of the Irish National Federation on Tuesday last comes at an opportune moment. Mr. Redmond's magazine articles and his spectacular poses have blinded many Englishmen to the relative proportions of the two sections of Irish Nationalists. Like Mr. Keir-Hardie, Mr. Redmond has been too much talked about. It is time to recall people to the realities of Irish life. There are seventy-two Nationalist members and only nine Redmondites. The leader of the nine may absorb more Parliamentary time next session than the leader of the seventy-two. The leader of any section whose action is uncertain will always be listened to with more attention than is due to either his speeches or his following. But small sections are not so novel as they once were in Parliament, and the interest in Mr. Redmond's speeches will gradually decline when it is once understood that the permanent forces of Irish life are with the seventy-two and not with the nine.

The Convention of delegates which assembled on Tuesday represented these permanent forces. The farmers were there in great numbers. Ireland is, and probably always will be, an agricultural country, and the men who till the soil must therefore be the ruling element among the industrial classes. The town labourers of Ireland, though their patriotism is fervid, have never given the same steady force and direction to the movement. There are Redmondites in Dublin just as there are still Boulangists in Paris, but the peasant in each country has given up the roses and raptures and has become reconciled to drab-coated Parliamentarianism. Again, the priests were there in force. This is in the eyes of some, perhaps, a sinister fact. There may still be Englishmen like Sir H. Chubb, who are hopeful of converting the Irish from the errors of Romanism. There are others who look upon clericalism in every form as an enemy with whom there can be no peace. But Lord Salisbury, in addressing the Nonconformist Unionists, uttered unawares the real truth in this matter. Ireland, he said, had produced a peculiar being, unknown in other lands—the Radical priest. "Has he the faith?" a priest has been known to ask in speaking of a bishop appointed in Cardinal Cullen's days, meaning thereby to inquire not whether his lordship had accepted the dogma of infallibility, but whether he was in sympathy with the policy of the Land League. It is because the Irish priest is a Radical that English Progressives need not be afraid of him. The individual priest may occasionally abuse the great power which is given to him by his double position of religious teacher and local political leader. But the power would go if it were abused often. To the broader mind it must be a source of encouragement that the new experiment in Irish government will have the priests on its side. In other Catholic countries statesmen have often had to choose between an unprogressive policy and a policy opposed by the clergy. The future rulers of Ireland need make no such choice: they will be supported by the Radical priest. The Radical priest, then, was mingled with the peasantry at Tuesday's Convention, and, with the addition of a representative delegation of shop-keepers and professional men, it made a good democratic gathering.

But what was the tone and temper of the meeting? It may be said that the tendency was against



any attempt to produce reconciliation with Mr. Redmond's group by any kind of arrangement. The delegates are content to rely, in their undoubted wish for national re-union, upon the gradual effect of the law of attraction to the larger body. In the rural districts especially it is believed that the severe struggle during the coming winter will do more than any artifice to weld the people together. This may be disappointing to those Liberals who had hoped that the split would end with a general hand-shaking. But it is probably the wisest policy. And no one need suppose that the division among Irish Nationalists has entirely made for evil. It has taken some of the gilding off national sentiment, and discouraged many men and women who had no basis but sentiment for their political faith. It has caused a good deal of bad language and a few broken heads. It has made matters much less simple for English statesmen. But there are compensations. We can spare a little of what John Mitchell called "sunburstry." The extravagant anticipation that Home Rule will immediately cure all human ills has happily faded away. Irish interest in politics, always quick, but of late years rendered somewhat too easily acquiescent by the unnatural unanimity under Mr. Parnell's leadership, has become more keen and actual. "Sure, father," said a Clare woman to her priest, "we'd have been killed entirely this winter only for the split." It had enlivened the dulness of her life, and made her doubtless more fitted to be a citizeness. It takes some practice in disagreeing to make men disagree reasonably; and as Irishmen will be bound to differ on some points when they govern themselves, it is just as well that they should begin differing beforehand. Again, the feeling against one-man power is a wholesome one. It would be rash to say that Ireland may never again come under the domination of one man, just as it would be rash to say that France will always be content to have no men, but only institutions. But for the present at least the tendency in Ireland is all against the revival of Mr. Parnell's power in any one man or body of men. The Convention was enthusiastic in its welcome of Mr. Sexton, Mr. Davitt, Mr. Dillon, and Mr. Healy, but no one thought of hailing any one of them as Cæsar. Indeed, the feeling in favour of Mr. Healy was perhaps especially warm because he is regarded as having voiced the general feeling against being over-bossed from Dublin. It was significant of this spirit that the Convention would not allow casual vacancies on the governing body of the Federation to be filled by co-optation: the delegates insisted on their being filled by direct election. The feeling would be dangerous if it meant that we should have further divisions into infinitesimal groups. But the strongest determination of the delegates was that they would allow nothing of the sort. Differences may be threshed out; once a course is decided on by the majority, it must be followed. As the Americans say, once a selection is made the Convention will "make it unanimous." This is the only satisfactory way to work either a party machine or a democratic government.

It would be idle, however, to deny that the want of any man who can speak indisputably for the whole nation may render it more difficult for the Government to obtain an authoritative consent to the Home Rule Bill than it was in 1886. A litigant appearing in person is always less inclined to compromise than a litigant represented by counsel. Mr. Parnell could in 1886 speak for everybody without the fear of being gainsaid, and this was much the simplest plan. But it may be questioned whether it was really the safest. It gave no guarantee for the future. It might well have happened that the real

public opinion of the country might have been stifled by one domineering personality, only to find voice when he was dead or fallen. Now English statesmen will have to meet the Irish people face to face. Mr. Sexton announced that when the Home Rule Bill was produced, the Irish members would call another great Convention together, offer the party's advice, but ask the Convention to decide. The responsibility for accepting or rejecting the Bill as a satisfactory settlement of Irish grievances will therefore rest upon the people themselves. There is no reason to suppose that they will be over-captious critics. They will be especially anxious, as becomes practical men, about the land question and the financial settlement. But they will view Mr. Gladstone's scheme sympathetically and as a whole, and they will abide by their own decision.

Two more examples may be given to show the practical way in which the Irish people face the situation. The party presented to the Convention a fully audited account of all the funds raised since the split. No other political party has ever given such a complete financial statement, and the fact that such a statement was given by the Irish party, and required by the Irish people, should silence Tory slanders against the honesty and business capacity of both. And in the second place, Irish members were expressly enjoined by resolution to be in their places throughout next session, not merely to support the Home Rule Bill, but to further English reforms.

#### TOWARDS DISESTABLISHMENT.

IT is a common opinion, not confined to Churchmen, that the agitation for Disestablishment is steadily growing feebler. If this were true, it would not be surprising. For the purpose of the agitation has already, in a considerable measure, been attained. No one can expect that in these days the cry for religious equality should, as it did in the days of tests and Church rates, stir the hearts of the better part of the nation like the sound of a trumpet. The worst forms of inequality have disappeared. The Church itself, awakened not less to its dangers than to its duties, has been zealously labouring to fortify its position, and Nonconformists freely grant that it has a firmer hold upon its people than it had a generation ago. Other great interests have meanwhile been claiming urgency. The whole question of social reform has been opened up; and the result is a growing breadth of political view, which prevents men from regarding either Disestablishment or any other particular change as the sovereign remedy. It would be no matter of wonder, therefore, if the agitation had lost something of its old fire.

The note of the agitation may have changed. Some of those who used to regard Disestablishment as absolutely supreme among political questions may have learned to appreciate the importance and urgency of other questions. Yet only a superficial observer can ignore the fact that as a political force Disestablishment has been steadily gaining and not losing strength. On the same day that the Bishop of Rochester was telling his Diocesan Conference that the cry was growing weaker, the members of the Liberation Society at their autumn meeting were rejoicing over the results of the General Election. They had good cause for rejoicing. The Disestablishment of the Church in England has not yet become an immediate question, but no Parliament has ever contained so large a number of members who have declared themselves ready for it when the time comes. Scotland has shown the strong and growing affection which,

according to Mr. Balfour, it feels for its State Church by returning forty-eight out of its seventy-two members pledged to Disestablishment. In Wales the case has become overwhelming. Out of its thirty-four members, only three will defend the Establishment. No manipulation of statistics in Scotland, and no ungenerous effort of despairing Churchmen in Wales to represent the attack upon the Church as merely an attack upon landlordism, can remove this evidence that in the opinion of Scotchmen and Welshmen their Churches, as Churches by law established, must cease to exist. The party of liberty have accepted the evidence as conclusive. They would have been false to every principle they profess if they had hesitated. Disestablishment in Wales and Scotland is now a mere matter of time and opportunity; on its merits it is a closed question. But the Bishop of Rochester was thinking only of England.

Here at least, we are told, the Church is securely built upon an impregnable rock, against which the Liberation Society will beat itself in vain. The Church will do well to rid itself of this delusion. We need hardly stop to argue that its future as an Establishment depends not on its influence in the great towns, where its best work is being done, and whence has come its increase of strength, but on its hold upon the country districts. In the towns its legal advantages count for comparatively little; in the country they count for a great deal. And in the country, outside the circle of the squire, the force of opinion is steadily setting against the Church. No one who read the speeches at that remarkable Rural Reform Conference which was held in London a year ago can have helped being struck by the frequent and hostile references to the parson. It was a truly representative conference, and the delegates appeared unanimous in their opinion that the squire and the parson are banded in an aristocratic ring against every effort to improve the position of the labourer. The experience of everyone who has attended political meetings in country districts goes in the same direction. No subject, not even allotments or Parish Councils, excites such enthusiasm as Disestablishment. The agricultural labourer may hope to derive much more from the change than it will yield, but it would be vain to deny that he is bent upon it. We are not discussing whether his unfavourable opinion of the Church is well founded or not, though we must allow that he knows better than we do where the shoe pinches. Rightly or wrongly, he is persuaded that no scheme of self-government in the country districts has any fair chance of working so long as the legal ascendancy of the Church is maintained.

Once convinced of this strong feeling, the Liberal party cannot shrink from their duty. To no principle are they more firmly bound than to that of religious equality; no principle can they follow with more perfect confidence, whithersoever it may lead them. Whether it come soon or late, Disestablishment, even in England, is inevitable. Mr. Gladstone once said most truly that "a current, almost throughout the civilised world, slowly sets in the direction of the severance of the Church from the State." England cannot long remain out of the stream of progress. In our minds the principle is settled, and the only question is to determine the time when public opinion is ripe enough for the change. There is every sign that the time is near. The Liberal party, then, must boldly face the situation, and be prepared forthwith to place English Disestablishment along with Scotch and Welsh Disestablishment upon their programme. They will not find the Liberation

Society unreasonable in its demands. The society certainly asks for immediate action in certain directions. It expects, for instance, the passing of suspensory Bills for Scotland and Wales, to prevent the creation of new vested interests. In regard to England, it will press for the passing of two measures which have already been read a second time in the House of Commons—a Bill for the acquisition of sites for places of worship, and a Bill for the enfranchisement of the leaseholds of chapels. But while admitting that the greater question, which will shake the whole country, must wait yet awhile, it looks, and is justified in looking, for a speedy declaration by the leaders of the Liberal party that the State Church in England must follow the State Churches in Scotland and in Wales. In supporting this claim, we view the question as politicians, refusing to encumber it with considerations as to the comparative merits of the Church of England and Nonconformist Churches. The policy of Disestablishment does not involve any attack upon the Church, or even any unfriendliness to the Church; it is based on the plain principle that every form of religious inequality is indefensible. That principle even Churchmen may accept; for there must be many among them who do not believe that their Church benefits by its State privileges and its State fetters. But we do not hope for much in this direction. From Churchmen generally we must expect the cry that religion itself will fall with the Establishment. "There is nothing more natural," said Andrew Marvell, "than for the ivy to be of opinion that the oak cannot stand without its support;" and the oak comes to the same opinion. The Church, we are sure, does itself injustice. Freedom has never killed any healthy institution. Be this as it may, the Church must prepare itself for the coming and inevitable change. Our duty as Liberals, at any rate, is clear. Whether we are friends of the Church or not, we must in the national interest show ourselves ready to loose it and let it go.

#### PROBABLE CONSEQUENCES OF THE DEMOCRATIC VICTORY.

THE decisive Democratic victory in the United States cannot fail ultimately to have a highly beneficial influence upon the trade not of that country only but of all the world; yet not improbably it will immediately check the growth of business. Mr. Cleveland is opposed to all duties not required for revenue purposes, but whether he will be able to carry his party with him remains to be seen. He will have a large majority in the new House of Representatives, but none, probably, in the Senate if he cannot secure the support of the Farmers' Alliance. A very great reduction of the tariff will unquestionably be opposed stubbornly by the Republican Senators, and whether their opposition can be overcome it is as yet impossible to foresee. It is to be borne in mind that two or three of the Southern States have already made a considerable advance in manufacturing industry, especially in iron, and it is possible that the representatives of those States may shrink from the sweeping away of all protection. But clearly some reduction of the tariff must take place, and that will tend to cause disturbance. At the present time manufacturers are protected practically from foreign competition. If foreign competition is greatly increased it is natural to expect that prices will fall, and with them that profits must decrease. After a while, of course, economies of all kinds will be practised, and the best machinery will be introduced, and the result will be a great improvement in



manufactures. Meanwhile, however, the tendency will be to check business. The United States have had two great harvests in succession. There is a very large demand for American agricultural produce all over Europe, and that may counteract the influence of uncertainty, and may consequently bring about a steady improvement in trade. Probably it would do so if the only apprehension were that duties would be generally swept away. But capitalists throughout the United States fear very much more from the decisive victory gained by the Democrats.

The support of the Farmers' Alliance, as already said, is indispensable if the Democrats are to have a majority in the Senate. But the Alliance is opposed not only to high duties, but also to what it regards as railway monopolies. It complains that the railway companies charge excessive rates for the conveyance of produce to the seaboard, that thereby they make it impossible for the western farmers to sell their grain, pork, and the like at a profit, and that thus the farmers are plunged in distress. The Alliance has been powerful enough to carry laws through many of the Western State Legislatures, which the railway companies allege interfere unduly with railway management, and unfairly cut down railway profits. Now that it has the casting vote in the Senate the railway magnates fear that it will endeavour to repeat this action in Congress. The fear is entertained all the more strongly because the capitalist classes generally have for years been using all their influence in favour of the Republicans, and consequently they feel that they are regarded by the Democratic party generally as opponents. Probably, too, an attempt will be made to break up the combination formed a little while ago to control the anthracite coal industry of Pennsylvania. It will be in the recollection of our readers that a syndicate of bankers and railway magnates lately bought a majority of the shares of the companies that convey the coal from the anthracite coal district to the towns, and that an arrangement was made by which the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company practically made subordinate to itself all the other companies, and has been enabled to regulate the output and sale of coal. There was a great outcry at the time in New York and the other principal cities supplied by the district, and efforts have been made in the Legislatures of New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey to annul the combination, on the ground that it was illegal and contrary to public policy. As yet, however, nothing has come of the agitation; but it is reasonably certain that in the new Congress a more energetic attempt will be made to break up the combination. Whatever the result may be, it is inevitable that the syndicate and all who have bought Reading railroad securities will be disturbed at the prospect. All these causes can hardly fail to check business in the Stock Markets in the immediate future. In itself that would be a good thing, for the prices of American railroad securities are already high enough, and anything that may prevent undue speculation, certain to end after a time in a crisis, is to be welcomed; while it is certainly desirable that a limit should be put to the exercise of an excessive power by a very few over the means of communication of half a continent. All the same, amid all these uncertainties, no sensible man will care to invest largely.

There is one other circumstance likely to act in the same way. The whites are once more in the ascendant in the South, and they have carried the South as one man for the Democrats. The South, therefore, will necessarily have a great influence in the councils of the victorious party. How will the Southern whites use their opportunity? is a question

that is being anxiously asked by the Republicans. Have they learned the lessons of a bitter experience, or will they try to reopen questions that had been supposed to be settled? Even if they are unwise enough to do so we may safely trust the good sense of the North and the West to prevent any mischievous measures. But there is one thing, at all events, which they are very likely to endeavour to do. In the early days of the Civil War, when Mr. Chase, the Secretary of the Treasury, was at his wits' ends to find the means for defraying its cost, he founded the National Banks for the purpose among other things of creating a market for the loans he had so frequently to issue. A tax of 10 per cent. was imposed upon the right of issue by the old State Banks; while the new National Banks were allowed to issue notes on paying a moderate tax, provided they held interest-bearing bonds of the United States as a security for the notes, and lodged the bonds in the Treasury to make sure that they were really held. There has always been a party opposed to these National Banks, which has been especially strong, as might have been expected, in the South. Apart altogether from the reasons which prompted their establishment, there is this strong objection to the National Banks from the Democratic standpoint, that they are an invasion of State rights; for though the right of the States to give the power of issuing notes is not destroyed, yet it is practically taken away by prohibitive taxation. It is extremely probable, then, that an increased effort will be made to get rid of the National Banks, or, at all events, to deprive them of their advantage over the State Banks, and so to resuscitate note issuing by the State Banks. But the supporters of the National Banks—who are, generally speaking, the capitalist classes—point out that the National Banks have secured to the whole Union a uniform paper currency of unquestionable goodness; and they contend that if the State Banks are allowed to issue notes that advantage will be swept away. And, furthermore, the several States, or some of them, may introduce unsound systems, which may lead to disaster. While all these fears and uncertainties continue it is almost inevitable that there must be a pause in business, and a period of greater agitation than has been gone through for a long time. But if there is a sufficient Democratic majority in the Senate, the reforms really desired by the bulk of the people will be carried after a while; the excitement will then speedily die away, and a period of greater prosperity will follow.

#### CHRONICLE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

**D**URING the last fortnight political interest has been almost monopolised by three or four of the great nations of Europe. The Balkans, that storehouse of explosives; the Scandinavian countries, where explosions affecting a more limited area are probably in preparation; Greece, and even Belgium, have been quiet enough. But the Italian General Election has added nothing to our knowledge, and the solution of the Hungarian crisis not much. The visit of the Czarewitsch to Vienna at the beginning of the week has been dwelt on with pleasure by the Austrian press, and the welcome given him has been noticed with equal satisfaction by the Russian press, as a proof of a *rapprochement* between Austria and Russia of good omen to the peace of Europe. Nevertheless, it is difficult to attach much more political importance to the visit than one naturally does to the visit at the same time of the King and Queen of Portugal to the Queen Regent of Spain. However, it was probably the expectation of the reception at Vienna which induced the *Paris Matin* to announce last week the formal conclusion

of a treaty between Russia and France—an announcement which has been made before, and is no more probable than it was then. Still, some of the semi-official German papers have caught at it as a useful argument for the new military Bills. The negotiations for a Russo-German commercial treaty appear to have fallen through.

But the situation in France has been most interesting of all. A whole series of dangers has been threatening M. Loubet's Ministry. To mention first the more remote, the Franco-Swiss Commercial Convention has no chance of passing intact—and with it is linked the fate of the Minister of Commerce. The Chamber, by its legislation on "hygienic drinks," has knocked the Budget estimates to pieces. The Government has had a strong hint to prosecute the Panama directors, and has been compelled to take it. But the Press Bill, permitting the destruction, "by judicial order," of printed incitements to outrage, has been the most threatening of all. Extreme Left and Right alike—M. Camille Pelletan and M. Rochefort, no less than M. Paul de Cassagnac—have insisted that there is little to choose in a matter of this kind between the order of a court and the order of the Executive, and that the powers demanded by the Government may simply be used to crush opposition papers. Besides, there has been a very general feeling among the "friends of order" that this Ministry cannot be trusted with more powers after its so-called "surrender" at Carmaux.

However, on Wednesday afternoon the debate seemed to indicate that the Ministry had surmounted the first of its difficulties. The Bill was made the occasion, of course, for an attack by the Comte de Mun on the anti-religious policy of Republican Governments, and for a demand that the new powers should not be used against Catholicism; to which M. Loubet made the usual reply. To gain time, the adversaries of the Ministry secured an adjournment. But after Thursday's debate it seemed stronger than before; and M. Loubet on that day displayed unwonted eloquence and tactical skill. Its fate will be settled before these lines appear.

While waiting for the Ministerial crisis, the Chamber has been preparing other difficulties for the Government. On Tuesday it definitely abolished the duty on "hygienic drinks," i.e., wine, beer, cider, perry, and, we believe, hydromel (one wonders if the French have ever heard of mum and spruce?); abolished the privilege of distillation free of excise duty hitherto allowed to wine-growers, and thereby created a deficit of about eighty million francs in the Budget estimates, which the abolition of the tax on vinegar—a logical necessity now—will raise to 106 millions. This deficit it recommends the Minister of Finance to meet by additional taxes on spirits, and a high licence duty. An alternative proposal to tax time bargains on the Bourse was rejected by 228 to 207. The proposed prosecution of the Panama directors is fully dealt with elsewhere.

There is a lull in the agitation for universal suffrage in Belgium. The leaders of the Labour Party deprecate further demonstrations just now before the King: and the ceremonies of Tuesday, his fête-day, passed off quietly enough. The only meeting held was that of students of the University of Brussels, to organise an agitation for universal suffrage. There is, however, some talk of a Congress to consider the question of a "general strike" if that reform is not granted by the Chamber. An amendment to the Address, in favour of universal suffrage, has only served to emphasise the divisions in the Left.

The agitation in Belgium has had its reflex in Holland—where the franchise, though much wider than in Belgium, is still also based on a property-qualification. A meeting of Socialists in Amsterdam on Tuesday ended in a procession which paraded the streets hymning universal suffrage, and was dispersed by the police after some fighting.

In Germany the prospects of the new military scheme are steadily growing worse. Herr Richter,

the Liberal leader, demands its rejection not merely on its own demerits, but to prove the power of the Reichstag. Everywhere agitation is in progress against any increase of taxation. The Governments of the greater States—contrary to the report we printed last week—are now said not to object to the Bill; but some of those of the smaller ones certainly do. Moreover, the maladroit advocacy of the organ of the German General Staff—the *Militär-Wochenblatt*—is doing the Bill great harm. First that paper attacked the Landwehr, and made light of their past services. Now it has made it tolerably clear that the reduction of service may be little more than nominal. In theory the term of service will remain three years: most of the men may be dismissed after the second year—but as a privilege only, not a right. And it is not clear to what classes of troops beside the Infantry the reduction will apply. Moreover, the Government lets it be known that it will not dissolve the Reichstag if the Bill is rejected—which its adversaries interpret as a proof of weakness.

The complicated scheme of financial reform now before the Prussian Parliament is less liked the more it is looked at. It increases the taxing powers of the communes, and therefore stimulates local self-government; but its leading feature, a property-tax, is very unfavourably received by Liberals and Conservatives alike. The Liberals prefer a legacy duty; while the Berlin *Post*, which is supposed to represent the large landowners, says that the scheme disregards the expressed wishes of the Upper House. And, of course, it is vigorously condemned by Prince Bismarck's organ. But if the scheme fails, where is the Prussian Government to get funds to increase its "matricular contribution" to the Imperial expenditure due to the Army Bill? Yet, if the tobacco-growers and the brewers of South Germany will not submit to the proposed indirect taxation, these contributions must be increased. And next year's Imperial Budget, with over nine millions sterling of extraordinary expenses, affords another warning.

The German Socialist Congress has not, so far, been very remarkable. The chief incident of interest to outsiders has been the rejection of the proposal to force all members of the party to abstain from work next May Day for the furtherance of the annual demonstration.

Herr Stöcker, the Christian Socialist and anti-Semite, has had to choose between his agitation and his court chaplaincy, and has given up the latter, with the declaration that "if the King is not monarchist, we cannot be," and with a strong condemnation of the recent acceptance by the Crown of Dr. Zelle, the Liberal, as Burgomaster of Berlin.

Of the second ballots in the Italian election, which took place on Sunday, some two-thirds were favourable to the Government. Only about a third of the voters polled. Detailed analyses of the composition of the new Parliament need not be reproduced here, for they are valueless. The only thing proved by the result is that the Italian nation accepts the Triple Alliance. The Cabinet is already threatened from without and from within. The Minister of Marine, it is said, will resign as soon as the Naval Estimates are passed; Signor Nicotera compares the Ministry to a band of adventurers; Signor Crispi is certainly hostile, and violently attacks the official pressure exercised at the elections; and the Premier's organ speaks of the Ministry as menaced by a coalition of Crispi, Nicotera, and Rudini. It is curious, too, that all parties seem pretty well satisfied with their own performances at the elections. The agitation against the proposed petroleum monopoly is growing.

On Sunday the first election took place to the legislature of the Canton of Geneva, under the new system of Proportional Representation. It was prophesied beforehand that the results would not be out till Thursday, but they were mostly known on Monday evening—though the proportion of seats each party was entitled to had not been fully



ascertained. There are 20,000 electors and five distinct parties; but some kind of coalition is hoped for which will give a working majority.

The new Hungarian Ministry has been formed with some difficulty. As was anticipated, the new Premier is Dr. Weckerle, lately Minister of Finance. An interview took place at the end of last week between the Emperor and the Prince Primate, at which apparently the latter expressed his preference for obligatory civil marriage rather than optional. The new Premier is of German extraction, a trained official, and belongs to the *bourgeoisie*—the first Hungarian Premier of that class. His appointment is well received on the Vienna Bourse and by the Vienna Liberal Press. But obligatory civil marriage will hardly follow just yet. The Ministry has plenty to occupy it in the way of administrative reform.

Now that the American election is over there is some apprehension (with which we deal elsewhere) of dislocation of business through the victory of the Free Traders. There is some talk of an extra Session of Congress to place wool and other raw materials on the free list, but it seems doubtful, and hasty tariff legislation is generally deprecated by business men. It is said that a small majority of the new House are pledged to oppose the free—that is, the unlimited—coinage of silver. The People's Party will hold the balance in the Senate. Mr. Cleveland's majority on the popular vote is about 430,000.

### THREE VOICES FROM THE LOWER DANUBE.

ON a journey made last year from the source to the mouth of the Danube, my previous experience enabled me to understand to some extent the political situation of the countries through which I passed until I reached the Iron Gates. From this point on, the barrier which separates the commerce of the upper portion of the river seems to have communicated itself to everything political above and below this line. From countries of civilisation and distinct national purpose, I was suddenly transferred to what should have been a confederation of states having similar commercial interests. Instead of this, however, I found that the hatred of one state for another appeared to be as strong as the hatred for all combined against a possible outside tyrant who would presumably treat them severally and individually as conquered provinces. I have never yet met anyone whose views upon the Eastern or Balkan question could be said to represent much more than that of a section, a religion, or a race-interest. For my part I took letters of introduction to a great variety of well-informed people in the four different countries making up the semi-civilised section of the Danube; yet, in spite of it, I left the country with a most conflicting mass of evidence on important points. In discussing this section of the world, I eliminate, of course, the official or politician class, and regard it purely from its commercial and industrial point of view. Curiously enough, three letters have come to me within a short space of time from three different countries along the Lower Danube, each of which reflects the views of an independent man, whose identity I am forced to conceal for obvious reasons. An esteemed friend in Roumania tells me that politics are in "a miserable state"; that the King appears determined to maintain the Russian party in power in spite of the nation. The only reason assigned to King Charles, who is a Hohenzollern and therefore a German, is that he prefers the "opposition" to be loyal, and thus thinks he can control a Government which stands directly under the guidance of the Russian Legation. My correspondent thinks that King Charles may possibly have a very deep reason for pursuing this rather "Byzantine policy," but that it will not pay in the long run, for Russia desires nothing better for her scheme than such a neutrality of Roumania. He assures me that the

Roumanian nation at bottom strongly hates Russia for its obvious desire to control the Government, and that the greatest stumbling-block to the expression of vigorous national independence is the attitude of this very same German king, whose heart one would suppose would be completely with the Triple Alliance.

This is the view of an independent gentleman of large means, living on his estates and intimate with people about the Court. Perhaps it is fair that I should add here that a gentleman in the suite of the King assured me most vigorously within a very few weeks that such expressions as the above were moonshine, and that the Government was as firmly determined to withstand any encroachment of Russia as could possibly be desired by the most loyal patriot. As between the two expressions, however, I am inclined to place in general more reliance upon the non-official than the official statement. It looks as though Roumania was attempting a neutrality which will be as disastrous to her as that which Frederick William III. attempted to maintain in Prussia between the years 1795 and 1806. His language against France was always most vigorous, but he declined all co-operation with England, Austria, or any of his natural allies, until it was too late, and Napoleon took from him half of his kingdom after the battle of Jena. King Charles, as a Hohenzollern, should know something of the history of his house, particularly in those years.

From Serbia I have a personal note written by a gentleman who has exceptional opportunities of knowing what is going on about him, and who travels the East periodically. He tells me "serious internal troubles might produce dangerous exterior pressure, and there is so much dislike and suspicion of Austria here that they do not wish to give her a pretext for her intervention, which they firmly believe she is seeking." So here we find Serbia dreading Austria, while Roumania across the way is dreading Russia, each, be it said in parenthesis, hating the other with equal cordiality. Neither country is rich enough to carry out the works of local improvement that are necessary to prosperity; neither has good roads or any suitable means of communication; the Danube, which flows between them, has not yet been even properly sounded or marked upon a chart, and yet, in Serbia as in Roumania, the traveller seems to be moving in a country that spends an enormous revenue upon soldiers and uniforms. The fear of Austria, suggested by my correspondent, is, I fancy, groundless. Nothing could induce Austria to accept Serbia, except to prevent Russia from swallowing up more of the Danube. The letter from which I quote gives a picture of great prosperity in the interior of Serbia. "I was especially struck," it says, "with the wonderful changes for the better in the districts reclaimed from the Turks during the last war, and cannot understand why Europe in its own interest does not end the present provisional state of things in the Balkans."

He does not say so, but it is very clear that no improvement can possibly be imagined unless each and every one of these states is forced to recognise Europe and not Asia as the arbiter of its destinies. Should England in conjunction with Germany and Austria guarantee the neutrality of these countries and proclaim a species of Monroe doctrine from the Iron Gates to Sulina, we should soon cease to hear of any intrigues in them. On the other hand, they would immediately become a field for immense industrial enterprises.

Here is an echo from Bulgaria, written by a warm-hearted patriot, who was educated at the Robert College in Constantinople, whose acquaintance I had the pleasure of making in the course of last year's canoe trip. He says that the little Balkan States desire only their liberty and independence, and that they all dread being swallowed up by a great Power. He is bitter against the "Russian Colossus" who threatens to destroy their existence, and adds significantly, "There is a marked change in the

attitude of Germany towards Bulgaria since the accession of William II., and especially since the fall of Bismarck. Before this last happy event, Germany affected complete indifference towards Bulgaria. The Iron Chancellor said with proud contempt from his place in Parliament 'that Bulgaria was not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian soldier.'

"Bulgaria has a part clearly marked out for her to play. She has resolutely raised herself by the side of the great Powers who sustained her and encouraged her in the unequal combat against Russia, and she believes they will not allow her to become a prey of the Czar's Government. My country desires peace above all things; for only through peace and security can any internal improvements take place."

The fourth Power on the Lower Danube, Russia, controls one of the mouths of the river, and is quite confident that she will soon have the others. The friends that I have in that country cannot write to me regularly on account of the danger to themselves should any expression used make them an object of suspicion to the local police. The only letter from Russia that I have, casts however, a curious sidelight upon Governmental matters. It is one from a man in high official station who was very indignant that the police should have confiscated my canoe, and, in addition to that, have placed a heavy fine upon it, which I had to pay before the boat was released. His letter, which reached me yesterday, the 19th, and which was twelve days on the way from St. Petersburg, informed me that so far his efforts in my behalf had been unavailing, but that he yet hoped to succeed in having the money refunded to me. This piece of information is curious, not that the public can care much whether I am a few pounds richer or poorer on account of a projected canoe cruise, but as evidence of the fact that four months from the date of confiscation no answer has come from the Russian Government in regard to a matter of this kind. It is rather remarkable that even this letter was allowed to pass the Post Office police, for not long ago a Russian told me that he sent an important letter by the hand of a special messenger so as to make sure that it would not be opened and read, as it was an important matter intended for some friends outside the country. The messenger disappeared and is presumably in Siberia. It is needless to say that the letter never reached its destination.

POULTNEY BIGELOW.

### IMPRESSIONS OF IRELAND.—III.

THE two great inventions by which Englishmen have been trying since Elizabeth's time not only to govern, but to civilise Ireland, are landlordism and the Irish Church. Neither was congenial to the temperament of the Celtic millions; and both must now be recognised as disastrous failures. The landlords are packing up, and prepared to get away on such terms as they can secure. The Disestablishment remains in possession of cathedrals which it never built and of parish churches it cannot fill, a stranger in the midst of strangers, with absolutely less power of influencing the populations of the west and south than our missionaries exert in the Tonga Islands. What would a Government which was really bent on governing do under these circumstances? Rely on the landlords still? or on the Protestant clergy, who have been nothing but the landlords' chaplains? Surely not. Do we make our missionaries in India part and parcel of the ruling power? Do we scorn, insult, and provoke by our language and bearing the Hindu priesthoods or the Mohammedan preachers, or even the fanatics who attend on both? We are much too wise to dream of such a thing. The Indian Government accepts the situation which it found, and did not make. Why should not the Irish Government accept that which has been so distinctly of its own making?

It is the Democratic movement which is now restoring their land to the Irish people, and which may, if all goes well, keep the people on the land. In spite of English prejudice, they are a people worth preserving. They have in them elements of which the Empire stands in need—sound physical qualities, brightness of temper, purity, and kindliness, and an attachment to the old Christian way of interpreting the world: things which on this side of the Channel, and especially in the dust-bins we call our cities, are threatened with formidable dangers. If the prosperity of a nation depends, at last, on the moral and physical health of the men and women who make it up, there is much to be said for retaining Catholic Ireland in the British Empire; and to give it self-government is the best way of keeping it sound and loyal.

But this implies that the Catholic clergy shall be allowed to exercise what Burke has called a "really paternal authority" over their flocks, and that men like our late Premier shall give up "stimulating with provocatives the wearied and half-exhausted bigotry" of the Ulster Protestants. If Ireland were a province on the banks of the Ganges, no one would dispute so obvious a principle. How can we hinder a nation which insists on obeying its chosen spiritual guides from doing what it wishes? We may thwart and persecute, and thereby we shall only increase the power we are anxious to lessen. In Ireland, Catholicism is Democratic. The priesthood comes from the people; they are their kith and kin, with no alien interests to divide them from their congregations, and the strongest possible motives to see the country peaceful and prosperous. Undoubtedly they are loyal to the Holy See; but to call them Ultramontanes in a political sense would be absurd. Their line in politics has been dictated by two motives, neither of them reprehensible or savouring of treason. One is the devotion to their native country which they feel with no less warmth than the most patriotic of their people. The other is their determination, repeatedly expressed, not to suffer the fate of the French clergy. French priests, they say, have lost the spiritual guidance of the nation by drawing back from popular movements, and by confining themselves to the pulpit and the confessional, when they ought to have been standing shoulder to shoulder with the laity on the public platform.

If this view of things can be described as "Clericalism," then the Irish priesthood is resolved to be clerical. But so is the country at large. Home Rule or no, the clergy will go on directing their flocks; and wherever the parish is mainly Catholic, there the priest will exercise, even against his individual liking, the influence which belongs to every moral authority when recognised by numbers. He will be required to give advice; to decide for or against schemes of action in politics and in economics; to protect the rights of the labouring class when the landlords seem to threaten them; and, in brief, to share in governing as the representatives of "vested interests" share in the government of England at this hour. It is not the modern secular plan; but what then? Democracy prides itself on the voluntary system in politics. This is nothing but the voluntary system in religion. And if it satisfies the majority, and is, moreover, agreeable to the tradition, temper, and principles of the nation taken as a whole, what avails our instinctive dislike to clerical influence and mediæval hierarchies? Home Rule for a country like Ireland must include such influences and take the mediæval hierarchy into its reckoning.

Of course there is a danger that the clergy will go beyond their legitimate sphere, as in well-known instances some of them undoubtedly have done. But that danger will not be diminished by withholding Home Rule. On the contrary, it will be increased. So long as the laity have no recognised political power, such as a Parliament in Dublin would give them, the clergy will, in three-fourths of Catholic



Ireland, exercise their dominion without let or hindrance. To run counter to them, even in things lawful, will be called mean, unpatriotic, and irreligious. The only method of bringing within bounds an omnipotent clericalism, unless we would persecute, is to set up over against it an enlightened lay authority, established on its own ground. Such an authority Dublin Castle never has been, and never will be. But the Parliament sitting in College Green, elected by popular suffrage, and truly representative of the Irish nation, would find the priesthood most unwilling to quarrel with it. The elements which are confusedly striving to express themselves in "Parnellism" would then discover a channel for their activity; and many things now left in the hands of the parish priest or his curates would be transferred to the local or the central authorities.

To anyone travelling in Ireland during the General Election, by far the most interesting of political phenomena was the Parnellite struggle against the clergy. It did not succeed; yet its failure was instructive, and we have by no means seen the last of it. "Parnellism" rallied a noisy following in the chief cities—in Dublin, Cork, and Waterford—and it was able to count a hundred thousand votes in its favour, although priests and bishops made the most determined efforts to beat it down. But more significant than the noise or the voting was the character of many who gave it their countenance—thoughtful and pious Catholics scattered over the land, professional men, and men of business; while the arguments on which they defended their policy deserve the most serious attention. It is manifest that the lay element in Ireland is slowly, yet surely, organising itself, and coming to the knowledge of its duties and responsibilities. The clergy feel it; they are keenly alive to the signs of the times; and, though naturally unwilling to surrender any portion of the influence they have hitherto wielded, the more candid among them own that the world is changing. They lament the American spirit which has made its way even into the villages; they perceive that, where rival newspapers are read, the multitude will split up into parties, and the priest will no longer hold the supreme authority. Not very long ago he was the political teacher of his flock. To a considerable extent he is so still, especially in remote districts and where the towns are insignificant. But though he delivers from the altar sermons which are often little else than lectures in politics, he has become aware that the daily and weekly press will more and more be his rival, if not his antagonist. In the Parnellite movement all manner of forces are struggling together, like the winds on the great sea; yet, taken in the sum, they will make for a genuine Home Rule, and they are calculated to bring the dominion of the clergy within the bounds which it must ultimately observe.

Not that this is quite a new thing. Home Rule did not originate with the priesthood. They were slow to take it up, and slower still to welcome the leadership of Charles Parnell. They followed because they had made up their minds, like the French politician, that they must always lead. It is this which reveals to us in the clearest light the absurdity of the charges brought against them by Tory speakers, of taking their cue from the Vatican and nourishing treason to England in their hearts. The Irish clergy are Democratic now that landlordism has completely broken down. But like all whose roots go deep into the soil—like farmers and peasants everywhere—they are by nature conservative, anxious to be on good terms with their neighbours, and not in the least cosmopolitan, or anything else that is abstract and "increases with the square of the distance." Even when some of them have been slow to interfere with the subtle and deadly mischief of boycotting—a most horrible form of torture, mental and physical, with murder in its train—it would be delusive to imagine that they at all approved what they did not immediately condemn. The sons of Zeruiah were too hard for King David; and the rage

of the evicted peasant has often proved more than a match for his instinct of obedience to the clergy. Shall we blame them if they did not throw the handle after the hatchet? Certainly, they were bound to uphold the moral law which, as we moderns perceive, condemns boycotting as essentially inhuman and diabolic. The question remains whether they could do anything beyond what they attempted. But, in any case, it is unfair to charge upon them that they did not stem the tide of a revolution which the Government itself was powerless to cope with. Clerical authority rests on tradition and persuasion, both of which in stormy times are apt to lose their charm. Yet no one will pretend that the Catholic priesthood in Ireland have not kept up in their flocks a high standard of honesty as well as of purity; that they are not a permanent moral force in the nation; or that the ferocious intolerance of boycotting is a measure of the kindness natural to the hearts of Irishmen.

"One free people cannot govern another free people," says Professor Froude. "Servorum non est respublica," exclaims Edmund Burke. And a democratic constitution implies the rule of the majority. You must either rule two-thirds of the Irish citizens by means of one-third, with the armies of England behind them, or let the two-thirds and the one-third come to an agreement as in other free countries, by fighting it out in a popularly chosen House of Commons. That one of the immediate results would be the extinction of landlordism we know; but landlordism cannot, in any case, survive. That another would be greatly to enhance the power of the Catholic priesthood has been frequently alleged, but that, in the view of the priesthood itself, is open to question, and, with the phenomena of Parnellism before us, may well be doubted. Yet though such did prove to be the event, why should we declaim against it, any more than we do against the undoubted influence of Catholicism in Upper Canada? But the danger of persecution to Ulster? It is chimerical. Judge by the long spell of peace and quietness, untroubled even by controversy, which has reigned in the provinces where Catholics outnumber Protestants in the proportion of five to one. The religious question in Ireland has ceased to have a meaning, except in so far as Protestants give it a political and a social significance. It is the land which is in dispute, not religion. But to settle the land, to create home industries, to develop the Irish markets, and to arrest an emigration which has gone beyond all reasonable bounds, a native Parliament is required, with power to do these things unmolested by party intrigues at Westminster. The Protestant population of Down and Antrim, with its friends throughout Ireland added, is too numerous to answer the ends and purposes of an aristocracy. Not one single part of the old system but has ignominiously broken down—clergy, magistracy, and landowners alike. There is left the army. But perpetual coercion is not, in a European or a civilised sense, government. And the Democracy of England have, twice over, declared by their votes that they will have nothing to do with coercion. What, then, is the alternative? To take Ireland as it stands, with its Catholicism, its Celtic fervour, its lively temperament, its passions and rivalries, its virtues, weaknesses, and aspirations; to give it the same chance which has been allowed to Canada and Australia; to insist that all who live in the country and draw their revenues from its soil shall take on themselves their due share in making it not only habitable, but prosperous; and to rid ourselves once for all of the old stock notions in regard to Church and State, which are losing their prestige as they have long lost their efficacy among ourselves, and which have brought forth in Ireland nothing but disunion and misery. Such is, in truth, the mandate given to the new House of Commons. And the more generously it is construed, the more likely will it be to produce its intended effect.

B.

## THE ROAD TO THE POLE.

THE old fascination of the ice-blocked northern seas has never relaxed its power since the merchant adventurers of Elizabeth's time fought their way northward, groping for a path through the bergs to Cathay. But it is no longer potent to draw money from national exchequers and send out great expeditions of hundreds of men, and bales of red tape to draw them back from serious danger. Polar exploration is becoming one-man work; and on this account it seems likely soon to be crowned with the success that three centuries have struggled for in vain. Lieutenant Peary's remarkable journey in northern Greenland last winter, and Dr. Nansen's romantic crossing of the ice-shield of southern Greenland in 1888, show how a small band of plucky and prudent explorers can successfully accomplish what larger forces have had to turn back from. Dr. Nansen has come before the world again, this time as a new champion prepared to wrestle for the first prize of geographical exploration—the attainment of the North Pole. His previous record shows him to be a man of magnificent determination, quiet courage, and almost unprecedented endurance. The calculations and observations on which he has based the plans for his proposed journey are so careful, and he has described them so simply and directly, that one scarcely realises at first the boldness and originality of his scheme. But the chorus of all but universal deprecation which the most famous British Arctic explorers raised at the close of the young Norseman's paper to the Royal Geographical Society on Monday night, showed how the novelty of his plan shocked against all conventional systems of Arctic routine.

Dr. Nansen's scheme rests entirely on a question of physical geography, on the poleward-flowing ocean currents. The existence of such currents has been known, or at least suspected, for ages:

"As in Arctic seas  
They say of old the instinctive water flows  
Toward some elected point of central rock,  
As though for its sake only roamed the flock  
Of waves about the waste."

Old Athanasius Kircher, sober German Jules Verne as he was, provided an axial tunnel through which the pole-seeking currents rushed tumultuously to regain the light at the South Pole and resume their northward surface wanderings. All practical Arctic men, however, found to their cost that the line of escape was in a strong current set south from the pole drifting-ice floes down Smith's Sound, and along the east coast of Greenland. They practically lost sight of the poleward current which, drawn in by this "immense pump," as Nansen calls it, comes partly from the Gulf Stream drift setting northward round the north of Norway, partly from Behring Sea through Behring Strait, and partly from the warm fresh outflow of the Siberian and North American rivers in summer. The inflowing streams seem to run along the coast of Siberia, converge off the New Siberian Islands, and thence flow straight across toward the north of Greenland, which divides the outflow into the Atlantic. The Arctic Sea is almost filled with ice-floes, separated in summer by lanes and lakes of open water, cemented together in winter into one vast continent of ice-hills. These floes are in motion summer and winter. Whenever a ship has been nipped—which happens every year to some of the little Norse whalers and sealers and almost invariably to the large ships of Arctic expeditions—it has always been drifted by the ice—always drifted southward when on the Greenland side of the pole, always drifted northward and westward when on the Behring Strait side. Of this the ill-fated American expedition in the *Jeannette* (Fox's old *Pandora*) afforded the best example. Not only was the ship drifted north-westward for nearly 700 miles, but after she sank various papers and other articles were carried on an ice-floe and recovered three years later off the south of Greenland. Many

things from Siberia have been drifted over in the same way, and Sir Edward Inglefield, in the few cheery words in which he expressed his admiration of Nansen's pluck, told how he once found a Siberian tree-trunk to the north-west of Greenland, which from its freshness could not have taken many months on the way.

This current which drifts the ice-floes across the polar area is to be Dr. Nansen's beast of burden. He intends to work his ship through the Kara Sea in the early summer of next year—in doing which Captain Wiggins said there would be no difficulty, reach the New Siberian Islands, push his way as far north as possible, and, when blocked, run into the ice and allow himself to be carried to the other side. All former Arctic men have fought against the ice: Nansen is to enlist its aid as an ally. He is prepared to drift slowly—perhaps two or three years may elapse before he emerges—but he will count the time as only two or three days; and, in truth, if his current runs straight and holds true, his actual days and nights will each last for months, to be fully employed in the innumerable scientific observations he is preparing to make.

We cannot describe his ship here, but it is a model of adaptation to environment, as indeed one would expect in a vessel designed by a modern biologist. Its many skins of hard, harder, and hardest wood, its sharply-pointed, steeply-sloping, iron-plated bow and stern, great beam and rounded contour under water, its movable propeller and rudder, all fit it to force its way through loose ice, and to compel an ice-pack to lift it clear of the water. The walls of the cabins are made of such non-conductors—cork, felt, reindeer's hair—as were never used before. Best equipment of all, the crew will consist of only twelve men all told—men picked for physical endurance, knowledge of ice work, and that quiet determination to go forward which makes our composite British blood proud of its Norse admixture. Without unduly depreciating British powers of exploration and enduring hardship, we must acknowledge that our Northern neighbours are more likely to succeed than we would be in such an enterprise.

In case the ice should, contrary to all expectation, crush his ship, Nansen has provided two big, decked boats, each large enough to carry all the crew; if they have to be abandoned, he has many smaller boats; if they cannot be carried in the event of a forward movement in the dog sledges, he carries prepared canvas, and will, as he did before, make boats out of the sledges on reaching open water.

At the meeting referred to above, Sir George Nares, Sir Allen Young, and Sir Leopold McClintock did not disguise their want of faith in the route and arrangement of the journey. They are men entitled to much respect on account of their achievements in the ice of long ago. But events move rapidly, and things have greatly changed in the twenty years since the last of them drove his two great ships, crowded with sailors, into the Palæocrystic Sea. These old expeditions broke down under their own weight, and under the terrible burden of providing a line of retreat. Nansen has provided no line of retreat, nor will he. His watchword and the name of his ship is *Fram*—Forward. His safety lies in getting through, and only increased danger would be met by turning back. There will be many anxious hearts here as well as in Norway during the years when the brave young fellow and his tried companions are drifting across the Polar Sea, but we feel confident that he will reach his journey's end if any man on this globe could do it, and we are sure that when he comes back to us he will be, as regards modesty and candour, "just the same man as before," for there is no room in his fine nature for the small pride that has destroyed so many lesser explorers through their own partial success. We respect our old Arctic admirals, although their views are narrow, and their training was a discipline not an education, but we admire and have faith in this man of science and common sense, this last of the Vikings.



## MURDER, MADNESS, AND THE PUBLIC MIND.

IT may be safely said that society at large received with perfect satisfaction the news of Neill's execution on Tuesday last. His was one of those horrific cases which the public is always invincibly resolved that a gallows death shall assist to make memorable. Had the evidence of insanity been twice as strong as it was it would have been hard to save the miserable creature from the rope. The dominant note of the comments in the daily press immediately on the conclusion of the trial was, "No mercy must be shown to Neill."

Whether he were really insane is a question which will not now be answered, and, so far as the individual case is concerned, there would be no profit in us discussing it at any length. To some it will always seem in a high degree improbable that the peculiarly flagitious crimes for which Neill was hanged could have been committed by a man of sound mind, but on the other hand there is nothing impossible in the supposition that they were. Active wickedness, of the sort that is commonly called unnatural, no doubt generally betokens a departure from mental health, which is insanity, or the beginning of insanity; but there are individuals whose mental irregularities and lust of crime are normal and perfectly healthy. They are in no sense the product of disease; far otherwise, they are entirely natural qualities. These are the individuals whom we call moral idiots. Specialists in insanity know the type well. It is a type which, all too frequently, appears to possess no one of the moral qualities. A well-known alienist had the care of a lad of thirteen who was of this type; by no means an idiot in understanding, he was hopelessly idiotic on the moral side; he was conscious of his state, and continually exclaimed, "Why has not God made me like other people?" History, ancient and modern, recalls many appalling examples of this affection of natural and normal moral depravity, examples of men and women, in high places and in low, whose morbid mental condition—not at all to be described as madness—exhibited itself exclusively, and through a lifetime, in acts of the most extravagant cruelty. What but a moral monster and idiot should we call the mother of the poet Savage, who "most ignominiously discarded and ignored him" at his birth, whose unnatural fury hunted him to death, who endeavoured, "by the most awful falsehoods," to drag him to the gallows. Johnson, seeking some explanation of her enormous conduct, could only observe that the "most execrable crimes are sometimes committed without apparent temptation." Shakespeare, with his unfailing insight, has put into the mouth of Edgar the ideal and absolute confession of the moral idiot:—

"I was a serving man, proud in heart and mind,  
That served the lust of my mistress's heart,  
And did the act of darkness with her;  
Swore as many oaths as I spake words;  
Wine I loved deeply, dice dearly;  
I was false of heart, light of ears, and bloody of hand;  
Hog in filth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness,  
Dog in madness, lion in prey."

Insanity begins in a departure, sudden or gradual, from the "state of feeling and modes of thinking and acting usual to the individual when in health;" and the friends of any individual of the type described would have good cause of alarm for his mental condition were he suddenly to enter on a course of cleanly and humane living. Crimes the most extravagant, then, can by no means always be ascribed to a mind diseased.

This, however, is not precisely the question which we set out to discuss. That question is whether the attitude of the public mind is always a fair one towards pleas of insanity raised in behalf of persons charged with murder? Often, if not usually, it seems anything but a fair one. Dr. Forbes Winslow has reasoned with much technical and philosophic force upon the inconsistencies pervading the public mind on the whole subject of insanity. A man, he says,

commits suicide. "At the inquest it is established that previously to the catastrophe the self-murderer was observed to have been odd in his manner and depressed in spirits. These symptoms are sufficient to satisfy the jury as to his irresponsible state of mind, and a verdict of 'temporary insanity' is without hesitation, in many instances properly, returned. It is notorious that in these cases juries eagerly avail themselves of the slightest evidence of mental derangement, and appear pleased to find that they have a fair and reasonable excuse for a verdict of lunacy." Impanel the same jury to try a case of murder, and they at once show themselves desperately and sometimes testily suspicious of the plea of insanity put forward in behalf of the prisoner; and, what is as bad, "the attempt thus made to protect the criminal immediately rouses the public indignation."

Take another issue, before another tribunal. The question is raised of the soundness of mind and capacity of a person to manage himself and his property. In the case of suicide the very smallest amount of proof determines the jury to a verdict of lunacy. In this case, where the future well-being of a whole family and a host of relations and dependents may be involved, "the *maximum* degree of evidence . . . is often set aside as totally unworthy of regard." The coroner's jury will do everything in their power "to protect the memory of the suicide from the imputation of *sanity*"; the other jury will go to almost any length "to shield the subject of inquiry from what is unphilosophically termed the *stigma* of mental derangement," even when it is plainly shown that "the most disastrous consequences are likely to ensue from his being permitted, when in a state of mental derangement, to deal with his property."

The medical witness who appears in a coroner's court in support of the plea of insanity is always a popular witness. The sympathies of the court and of the public are with him. The same witness appearing before the other tribunal to urge that the subject of inquiry, being in his opinion insane, should be legally restrained from making ducks and drakes of his property, is almost always an unpopular witness. Still more unpopular, in nine cases out of ten, is the expert who testifies to the madness of a person charged with a cruel murder.

The position of this witness is apt, indeed, to be unenviable in the extreme. The public mind is inflamed against the prisoner, the judge may show himself impatient of the subtleties of the expert's reasoning, the jury are almost certainly incapable of understanding them. The expert has the appearance of trying to upset patent facts in his endeavour to get the accused acquitted. The prisoner seems to be in the fullest possession of his faculties; he stands calm and collected before the court; he makes pertinent suggestions to his solicitor. The evidence has proved, not only that the crime was grossly and exceptionally cruel, but that it was planned and accomplished with skill and cunning out of the common, and the traces of it removed with particular ingenuity. If this be the author of the crime who stands before the court, what tedious nonsense for a doctor to pretend that the man is of unsound mind! The jury are ready to echo the indignant and offensive exclamation of Baron Bramwell during the trial of the mad necromancer, Dove, "Experts in madness! Mad Doctors!"

The "mad doctor" in the witness-box may all the while know conclusively the madness of the prisoner in the dock. Insanity is not always an obviously apparent disease, and often the less manifested, the rare and hidden forms of it, are those which the medical witness is called upon to establish—and which he labours in vain to establish—to the satisfaction of a tribunal utterly unskilled in the subject. His expressed opinion may be in exact conformity with the experience of the ablest men engaged in the study and treatment of the insane, but if the alleged criminal be (what so many

accomplished criminals are) a "reasoning" lunatic, whose madness presents no coarse and salient symptoms; if he do not actually gibber in the dock, or fall down in epileptiform convulsions, the jury will be disinclined, in proportion to the enormity of the offence he is charged with, to give him the benefit of whatever hazy doubt they themselves may entertain as to the derangement of his mind. Probably, too, they will think that the doctor is no more honest than he should be. And the general public will, almost to a surety, say ditto to the jury.

#### THE SOCIETY OF AUTHORS' CHOICE.

THE unhesitating heartiness with which Mr. George Meredith, the other day, was chosen to succeed Lord Tennyson as President of the Authors' Society appears to have bewildered certain scribes in the daily press. Fit successor he may be, but why (they demand) so obviously fit? Why Mr. Meredith rather than Mr. Ruskin or Mr. Froude? For years before his death Lord Tennyson stood undisputed chief of our literary hierarchy; but were Mr. Meredith's claims to the succession so prevalent that no others need be discussed?

I do not propose to answer these questions—likely enough they cannot be answered without drawing odious comparisons—but would suggest to the inquirers that they have just now an opportunity of finding out why the young men, at any rate, rise enthusiastic to the name of George Meredith. Let them take three shillings and ninepence to their discount bookseller and purchase a little volume called "The Empty Purse, and other Poems."\* They will not find it easy reading. There are passages here and there that, for difficulty, would put Sordello to the blush; and for this reason, that Browning's trick is to give you thought in the making, so that, the clue once picked up, you can follow through the intricacies with fair ease; whereas Mr. Meredith exhibits his thoughts as finished products, and leaves you to wonder how in the world he contrived them. But after some patient study "The Empty Purse" becomes very beautiful reading, for it holds the heart of the secret that has made beautiful so many of its author's novels.

A quick and helpful love of all things young is Mr. Meredith's grand secret; or, as he calls it—

"The cry of the conscience in life:  
Keep the young generations in hail,  
And begueth them no tumbled house!"

It seems as if he would count his life well spent if at its close he could be sure of having advanced the foothold of these young generations by an inch, of having made smooth a single obstacle in the way of their happiness. The same affection which, in his latest novel, became almost an aching pity as it followed Nesta into her trouble, here speaks with a mellow cheerfulness. His love of youth is no weak hankering after—

"Days when the ball of our vision  
Had eagles that flew unabashed to the sun;  
When the grasp on the bow was decision,  
And arrow and hand and eye were one;  
When the Pleasures, like waves to a swimmer,  
Came heaving for rapture ahead!"

but a reflected joy in those days; a happy philosophy aware, without repining, of their value, and eager to make this value clear to the young who can yet profit by it. With his own age Mr. Meredith has no quarrel. It has brought him the wise eye that sees Earth to be

"The sower's bed, but not the reaper's rest;  
An Earth alive with meanings, wherein meet  
Buried and breathing and to be,  
Then of the junction of the three,  
Even as a heart in brain, full sweet  
May sense of soul, the sum of music beat."

\* "Poems. The Empty Purse, with Odes to the Comic Spirit, to Youth in Memory, and Verses." By George Meredith. London: Macmillan & Co.

This is fine wisdom for the middle-aged: but the first privilege of this wisdom, he insists, and a grown man's first duty to the earth that has nurtured him, is to love her children:

"... deepest at her springs,  
Most filial, is an eye to love her young."

Nor is Mr. Meredith's view of youth, for all his joy in it, a sensuous view. He praises it as a season of clean pleasures, simple fare, and strenuous endeavour. Not even Tennyson has preached a more robust patriotism than you may find in these pages. Mr. Meredith has touched the whole gamut of courageous delights that lies between the first loves of Richard Feverel and Lucy Desborough and the cricket in Evan Harrington: and the note is always manly. But the reading of this small volume of poems leaves one convinced that the writer is even manlier than his work.

One of the reasons—indeed the chief reason—why the Authors' Society exists is that it may help the young and inexperienced in the profession of letters. Is it surprising, then, that we should think Mr. Meredith an even better president than Lord Tennyson? It is no question of comparison between their work. But Lord Tennyson was serenely content with the established order of things, and very naturally, since he was a part of it: whereas Mr. Meredith was, and is, one of the fighters, and fights at the head of the younger men and women:—

"The young generation! ah! there is the child  
Of our souls down the Ages! to bleed for it, proof  
That souls we have, with our senses fled,  
Our shuttles at thread of the woof.  
May it be better than ours,  
To encounter the rattle of hostile bolts,  
To look on the rising of Stranger Powers.  
May it know how the mind in expansion revolts  
From a nursery Past with dead letters aloof,  
And the piping to stupor of Precedents shun,  
In a field where the forefather print of the hoof  
Is not yet overgrazed by the watering hours,  
And should prompt us to Change, as to promise of sun,  
Till brain-rule splendidly towers."

Is it surprising, I repeat, that in return the younger generation, which reveres Tennyson, should feel a devotion above reverence for George Meredith?

And as he sings of youth so he sings of spring. Three more exquisitely happy spring-songs than "Night of Frost in May," "Breath of the Briar," and the incomparable "Tardy Spring," it would be hard to find in any volume since the line of the Elizabethans failed. Of the last-named lyric, with its ending—

"Now the North wind ceases,  
The warm South-west awakes,  
The heavens are out in fleeces,  
And earth's green banner shakes"

—no criticism can describe the spontaneous charm, nor yet (to quote from Mr. Meredith yet once more)—

"Nor yet can any mortal tell,  
Save only how it shivers through;  
The breast of us a sounded shell,  
The blood of us a lighted clew."

A. T. Q. C.

#### MAURICE BARRÈS.

AN early novel of the younger Dumas bears the alluring title: "The Story of Three Women and One Parrot." So M. Maurice Barrès might have entitled his new book (Paris: Perrin) "The Story of Two Women, a Man, and Two Lapdogs," but, not being a humourist, he has preferred to call it "L'Ennemi des Lois." Indeed, M. Barrès is nothing so little as a humourist. He takes himself with prodigious seriousness. Is not his whole creed the creed of taking one's self with seriousness, the cultivation of the Ego, the Neo-Buddhistic contemplation of self? It is really a remarkable birth of time this divine egoism of M. Barrès; there is a lofty impertinence about it which is quite delightful. It is the New Asceticism, which sort of asceticism, many of the weaker brethren will be consoled to learn, involves



a good deal of refined sensuality. Oh! yes, it is all very refined. Everything must be "elegant"—a great word in French literature just now. We are to cultivate an "elegant" detachment, we are to keep our own individuality in "elegant" repair, unsullied by the world. What old-fashioned folk call vice finds its place in the system, but it must be "elegant" vice—"l'élégance dans le mal." And it must be intellectual vice, for M. Barrès is of the intellectual, not the sensuous, temperament. He recognises no reality but pure thought: "the only interesting thing is the soul." And, parodying Théophile Gautier, he has said of himself: "I am a man for whom the external world does not exist." And the fun of it all is that M. Barrès is Deputy for Nancy.

In his new book his great catchword seems to be "sensibility." He glances at some of the leading social reformers of the century, from Saint-Simon to Kropotkin; but merely, he says, out of curiosity as to the points in which their theories accord with modern "sensibility." The accusation levelled against him, that he is the apostle of a new religion, he haughtily rebuts. The world, says he, has no need of a system the more: is not the Catholic religion quite sufficient for the deepest needs of those who insist upon a faith and a God? No, it is not systems we want, but energy; the energy to bring our morals into conformity with our "sensibility."

Presumably, then, the personages of his book, André, "a young man who likes to have clear views and to reason"; Claire, "a girl educated on modern principles"; and Marina, "a woman unembarrassed by any of the old social conventions," are typical examples of this peculiar kind of energy. André is a *révolté*, a young university professor who is condemned to a term of imprisonment by judges of no "sensibility," or of the wrong sort, for a series of newspaper articles attacking the principle of military obedience. André's demeanour in the dock procures him many sympathisers, and the devoted friendship of two ladies, one of whom, the girl educated on modern principles, he ultimately marries. The courtship of the pair is quite unlike the wooing of average flesh and blood. It reminds one of the flirtation of Professor Bellac and Miss Lucy in the last act of *Le Monde où l'on s'ennuie*. The lady has but one desire: to know what will take the place of the present order when the Social Revolution is accomplished. A good many of us besides Mdlle. Claire are asking that question and getting all sorts of answers, from Mr. Bellamy's to Mr. William Morris's; but André, a wise youth, puts the question on one side and gives his lady-love, instead, a series of lectures on the great socialists of the past. Here is a characteristic page about Lassalle, whom André sums up as follows:—

(1.) An incontestable facility of assimilation, and, in the region of philosophy and figures, where he was quite at home, the gift of enlivening and popularising.

(2.) An unpleasant touch of the romantic "gay dog," a sort of opera-tenor pleasing to Byronic imaginations.

(3.) Snobbery: it was not enough for him to compose his ego ("*à composer son moi*," a pet phrase of M. Barrès, who alone knows what it means) and to propagate through the world those soul-reductions that are called systems; this revolutionary wanted to conquer a place in the social organisation.

(4.) Throughout his love affair with Helen von Dönniges he "shows off" in a taking way; one likes his asperities, his quivering under every hand that touched him, and the frenzied crisis after which he rushed headlong and impaled himself. . . .

"You reproach him, then," answers Claire, "with his fondness for the social hierarchy and his romanticism. But that is Disraeli all over."

"Not so fast! Disraeli had a sensual and chimeric imagination of life. His delicious

autobiography in 'Endymion' is decisive on that point. But don't compare him with Lassalle. If Disraeli knew better than any man how to make play with society, it always was play: that is, a passionate but disinterested action, whatever else it was. A poet, a dandy, a man of ambition and manager of other men, this contemptuous Disraeli had the gift of keeping things in their right proportions; he preserved his own independence. Lassalle, on the contrary, beside his fancy for the attitudes of vulgar melodrama, took a base pleasure in things for themselves. . . . The man who pleases me I compare to a good dramatic company, where several heroes play their parts, 'for love,' to exercise their strength, but I dislike a ventriloquist who in ever so many different tones seeks filthy lucre."

"Besides," says Claire, "Lassalle fell in love with a silly girl."

"That," answered the sage André, "was not peculiar to him; we always think that of other people's love affairs."

Assuredly; and most of us will think it of André's, when we read that Claire, after marriage, not merely winked at her husband's continued relations with the second string to his bow, Marina, a Russian Princess who has only two fancies, love and lapdogs, but actually proposed a triangular household—upon which curious arrangement the book abruptly closes. Thus, we infer, are modern morals to be brought into conformity with modern sensibility. Much of the book is a strange, dreamy sort of Odyssey, beginning with Venice (whither all free-lovers repair, since Byron and the Guiccioli, not to mention Frou-Frou and M. de Valréas, set the fashion) and ending with the various palaces of Louis II. of Bavaria. That poor mad King seems to have a weird fascination for M. Barrès, who evidently regards him as a typical cultivator of the intact and independent Ego. Another such cultivator, thinks M. Barrès—this time more sanely—was Goethe: and his application of the adjective "Goethien" to his hero André has already brought him into quite a pretty little quarrel with M. Paul Bourget. One lays down "L'Ennemi des Lois" with an aching head, and a tendency to ask,

Do I sleep, do I dream,  
Or is visions about?

What does M. Barrès mean? Is he laughing at us in his sleeve?

## THE DRAMA.

### "KING LEAR."

THIS week I am going to be perverse. I ask pardon in advance. I had thought of filling this page with simulated emotions, with the impressions which, from all I read and hear, a well-regulated mind ought to receive from such a play as *King Lear*. In this mood I should have discussed the fashion in which Lear curses Goneril, and contrasted Mr. Irving's plan of, falling on his knees and talking to himself with, say, Rossi's plan of standing erect and bellowing at the audience. I should have pretended to believe that the character of Lear, as shown in every scene and line and interjection, was a thing of intense psychological interest, and that Mr. Irving had thrown a searching light upon each one of the old man's successive *états d'âme*. I should have told fulsome lies about the weird impressiveness of the raving upon the storm-swept heath. Probably I should have gone even so far as to declare I understood the part of Mad Tom, and believed Mr. Terriss to understand it, too. All these things, and worse, I was within an ace of doing, but, now that it comes to the pinch, I find I cannot do them. There are times when the mere inertia of one's mind compels one to record one's real feelings. Dissimulation demands a certain expenditure of energy—

and at this moment I am not equal to it. You perceive that I am very unhappy.

Indeed, whenever I read in the papers that Mr. Irving is going to produce another Shakespearian tragedy, my heart sinks into my boots. For I know that I am once more going to feel myself cut off from the rest of my kind—an intellectual outcast, an artistic pariah. The world at large seems to attach so much importance to these productions, seems to get such enjoyment from them, impressions so various and so profound. Now a profound impression is what I always miss at the Lyceum when Shakespearian tragedy is a-playing there. Many minute pleasures I get, to be sure, but not a deep and abiding impression of the greatness either of the play or the player: they are pleasures arising from subordinate matters and side issues! They touch the mere fringe of the subject. They are virtually irrelevant pleasures. That is what happens to me in the case of *King Lear*, and am I not right in calling such an attitude of mind perverse?

Take, for instance, my (1) dominant impression of *King Lear*. It is absurd. I am quite angry with myself for having it. You would never guess it. It is an impression of the open air, of a free country life, of bleak moors, rolling downs, steep chalk cliffs, the tangle of bracken, oaks warped and stunted by fierce winds. Whenever one of Mr. Hawes Craven's landscapes was before me, I could think of nothing but these things, and the play going on in the foreground seemed to me vaguely something to be resented as an interruption of my train of thought on what Richard Jefferies called "Wild Life in a Southern County." The scene wherein Edgar escapes from his pursuers, a low hill over which the stars peep—it is a mere strip of painted canvas, a "carpenters' scene"—was as refreshing to the spirit as a walk by night along the crest of Hindhead. The last scene of all, the Kentish Shore near Dover, was a thing of perfect beauty. I fell to thinking how not only Shakespeare and his audiences, but people clothed and, perhaps, behaving like the characters of his play, knew the very same trees, and fields, and hillsides as we know; how for us, as for Mad Tom, "Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind"—very commonplace and stale reflections, I know, yet more interesting to me than the play. But, of course, the open-air feeling ought not to be one's dominant impression of *King Lear*. It has really nothing to do with the tragedy.

Then (2) I had an impression of beauty, not tragic beauty, but pictorial and plastic beauty—the beauty of Cordelia's clinging robes, the gorgeous garments of Goneril and Regan, the neutral-tinted cloaks of the courtiers and warriors, the simple elegance of the tent in which the sick Lear is tended by his daughter. Had the whole performance been in dumb show—and, for all I could hear of Mr. Irving's lines, much of it might just as well have been—I should still have enjoyed my evening at the Lyceum by merely keeping my eyes open.

Connected with this was (3) a feeling of romance, that peculiar touch of romance which comes from the mingling of different ages and styles—the Pagan oaths and the Christian sentiments (or anti-Christian, it makes no difference here), the old Roman palaces which Mr. Ford Madox Brown has imagined for the homes of the British chieftains, the barbaric uncouthness of Lear's courtiers and the quasi-civilisation of the mere names Burgundy and Aquitaine! This curious blending into a harmonious whole of things usually opposed is, to me, one of the keenest pleasures to be derived from Shakespeare. It is, of course, a feature common to all work which had its impulse from the Renaissance. But in *King Lear* it is peculiarly marked, and they do excellently to insist on it at the Lyceum.

Another impression (4) I had which touches the heart of the matter more closely: an impression of physical discomfort, almost too grievous to be borne. You will have guessed that I am thinking of Lear

over the dead body of Cordelia. Surely this scene is too painful for the stage? Johnson thought it too painful even for a book. "I was many years ago so shocked by Cordelia's death," says he, "that I know not whether I ever endured to read again the last scenes of the play till I undertook to revise them as an editor." I, too, was shocked, and, in admitting it, may perhaps be accused of contradicting the statement with which I began—that I missed anything like a profound impression; but it is not, I submit, the greatness of the play which profoundly impresses me here, still less any greatness in the acting. I scarcely listen to Shakespeare's words, nor note Mr. Irving's delivery of them at this juncture; it is the inherent pity of the thing which affects one, *lacrymæ rerum*. The old man merely has to appear with his daughter in his arms and the trick is done. Such scenes are like the deaths of young children on the stage, any dramatist can make you weep over them. He needs no art; Nature does his work for him.

Number 5 in my catalogue of impressions is a sense of blank disappointment with the cursings and ravings of Lear. These ought, I suppose, if the play is to accomplish its great purpose, if it is really the "Titanic work" Mr. Irving calls it, to move one, first to terror, and then to pity; but, as a matter of fact, they left me quite cold. Lear's cursing of Goneril gave me no thrill. Perhaps this was because I could not make out what Mr. Irving was saying; perhaps mere violence of language does not affect me. As to the madness, that was merely monotonous and tiresome—Heavens! how tiresome it was! And yet the trio on the heath, King, Edgar, and Fool, ought to have had a weird effect. I should like—I warned you I was going to be perverse—to see M. Maurice Maeterlinck try his hand at this triptych of studies in madness—real, feigned, and partial. One might, at any rate, Maeterlinckise the scene with very little burlesque. Here is a fragment:—

(*Une Lande. Trois Fous.*)

*Premier Fou*: Crache, flamme! Jaillis, pluie! Pluie, vent, foudre, flamme, vous n'êtes point ingrats! Vous n'êtes point mes filles!

*Deuxième Fou*: Je t'crois.

*Premier Fou*: Tu as donc tout donné à tes filles que tu en es réduit là?

*Deuxième Fou*: Pourquoi?

*Premier Fou*: Parceque . . .

*Troisième Fou (chante)*:—

Saint Witold s'en allait

Tout le long de la forêt

Trois fois à pied,

Trois fois à pied. . . .

Saint Witold et Saint Ménéhould,

Saint Ménéhould et Dame Marie . . . etc., etc.

Seriously, I take it the heath scene ought to give one an impression of the uncanny raised to the *n<sup>th</sup>*, the sublime of the uncanny. At the Lyceum I had nothing but a puzzling glimpse of three people groping about the stage in the wet. Mr. Irving's indistinctness and Mr. Terriss's essentially prosaic manner combined to ruin the scene.

I have tried faithfully to set down my impressions as they came to me. I am painfully conscious, let me repeat, that they are quite the wrong sort of impressions to have about *King Lear*, but I have no others. One of the inferences which may be drawn from them is, I suppose, that Mr. Irving's Lear has little significance for me. I liked Mr. Holloway's robust and sonorous Kent, and Mr. Frank Cooper's Edmund I thought excellent in the stirring business of the last act. Of course, Miss Terry's Cordelia is absolutely beautiful, and the little that Miss Ada Dyas and Miss Maud Milton are allowed to do as Goneril and Regan is admirably done. Mr. Gordon Craig's sketch of Goneril's steward is amusing. . . . And now, with Mr. Hawes Craven's scenes still haunting me, I cannot rest till I have buried myself in the country. But I shall not take *King Lear* in my pocket. A. B. W.



## MR. G. F. WATTS.

THE subject on which all of us are most nearly agreed—painters, critics, and the general public—is the very noble and legitimate talent of Mr. G. F. Watts. So universal is his talent that it has even brought the Bayswater drawing-room and the Chelsea studio into temporary agreement. Nor have these columns joined in any half-hearted way in the general chorus of admiration. Nor do I wish now to withdraw a single epithet, or qualify the admiration I have always expressed for this great artist. On no account would I expose myself to the charge of having grown tired of hearing Aristides called "The Just," but it seems to me that we should be better able to appreciate his genius if we would consent to an impartial examination of it. The present time is suitable to such examination, for in the New Gallery there hangs now on view one of his finest portraits—a portrait in which he has obviously tried to realise all his artistic ideals. I mean the celebrated portrait of Mrs. Percy Wyndham.

The painter's intention in this portrait was clearly to re-create in a modern form the opulent art of Old Venice, as the type of the eternal beautiful as civilisation presents it. "The formula for its perfect and complete expression was discovered by the painters of Old Venice: it is not in my power," the painter said, "nor in that of any man, to improve on that formula, and it is legitimate, since the idea is the same, to adopt it." And it was difficult for one so steeped in Venice as Mr. Watts not to read Veronese into an idea (I use the word in its Platonic sense) so gorgeous and full of southern colour. So do I imagine the painter's mood on sitting down to paint, and the picture is from end to end its manifestation. There are laurel leaves for a background for the head, and a large flower-vase in the right-hand corner, and a balustrade on the right; and the Anglo-Venetian lady is attired in a rich robe, brown, with green shades, and heavily embroidered; her elbow is leaned on a pedestal in a manner that shows off the plenitudes of the forearm, and for pensive dignity the hand is raised to the face. It is a noble portrait and tells the story of a lifelong devotion to art, and yet it is difficult to escape from the suspicion that we are not very much interested and that we find its compound beauty a little insipid to our taste. In avoiding the fashion of his day Mr. Watts seems to me to have slipped into an abstraction. The mere leaving out every accent that marks a dress as belonging to a particular epoch does not save it from going out of fashion. It is in the execution that the great artists annihilated the whim of temporary taste, and made the hoops of old time beautiful however slim the season's fashions. To be of all time the artist must begin by being of his own time; and if he would find the eternal type he must seek it in his own parish.

The abstract idea has always been a besetting snare for Mr. Watts, and in this picture, as in every picture painted since he was a very young man, the abstract rather than the *idée plastique* seems to hold his mind. Even in his treatment of the complexion he seems to have been impelled by some abstract conception rather than by a pictorial sense of harmony and contrast, and partly for this reason his synthesis is not beautiful, like the conventional silver-grey which Velasquez used so often on the gold-brown skins of Titian's women. That brown shadow along the nose is no more than a harsh statement of what was beautiful in nature; and the forehead, too, where it comes into light, where it turns into shadow; the cheek, too, with its jaw-bone, and the evasive modelling under and below the eyes, are summarily rendered, and we think perforce of the supple, flowing modelling, so illusive, and apparent only in the result with which Titian would have achieved that face. Manet, an incomplete Hals, might have failed to join the planes,

and in his frankness left, without attempt to deceive us, all he could not say, but he would have compensated us with a beautiful tone.

For an illustration of Mr. Watts's drawing we will take the picture of "Love and Death," perhaps the most pictorially significant of all Mr. Watts's designs. The enormous figure of Death advances impressively with right arm raised to force the door which a terrified Love would keep closed against him. The figure of Death is draped in grey, the colour that Mr. Watts is most in sympathy with and manages best. But the upper portion of the figure is vast, and the construction beneath the robe too little understood for it not to lack interest; and in the raised arm and hand laid against the door, where power and delicacy of line were indispensable for the pictorial beauty of the picture, we are vouchsafed no more than a rough statement of rudimentary fact. Love is thrown back against the door, his right arm raised, his right leg advanced in action of resistance to the intruder. The movement is well conceived, and we regret that so summary a line should have been thought sufficient expression. Anyone who has ever held a pencil in a school of art knows how a young body, from armpit to ankle-bone, flows with lovely line. Anyone who has been to the Louvre knows the passion with which Ingres would follow this line, simplifying it and drawing it closer until it surpassed all melody. But in Mr. Watts's picture the boy's natural beauty is lost in a coarse and rough planing out that tells of an eye that saw vaguely and that wearied, and in an execution full of uncertain touch and painful effort. Painting has nought to do with abstract ideas, and when these are introduced into painting the execution suffers. Unless the painter is especially endowed with the instinct of anatomies, the sentiment of proportion, and a passion for form, the nude is a will-o'-the-wisp, whose way leads where he has neither wings nor feet to follow. No one suspects Mr. Watts of one of these qualifications; he appears even to think them of but slight value, and his quest of the allegorical seems to be merely motivated by an unfortunate desire to philosophise. In the picture of the two nude figures ascending a mountain, I will merely ask if we find therein any suggestion either of the love of form which we find in Ingres or even Cabanel, or the sculptured decorativeness of Poussin.

As a colourist Mr. Watts is held in high esteem, and it is as a colourist that his admirers consider his claim to the future to be best-founded. Beautiful passages of colour are frequently to be met with in his work, and yet it would be difficult to say what colour except grey he has shown any mastery over. A painter may paint with an exceedingly reduced palette, like Chardin, and yet be an exquisite colourist. To colour well does not consist in the employment of bright colours, but in the power of carrying the dominant note of colour through the entire picture, through the shadows as well as the half-tints, and Chardin's grey we find everywhere, in the bloom of a peach as well as in a decanter of rich wine; and how tender and persuasive it is! Mr. Watts's grey would seem coarse, common, uninteresting beside it. Reds and blues and yellows do not disappear from Mr. Watts's palette as they do from Rembrandt's; they are there, but they are usually so dirtied that they appear like a monochrome. Can we point to any such fresh, beautiful red as the scarf that the *Princesse des Pays de la Porcelaine* wears about that grey which would have broken Chardin's heart with envy? Can we point to any blue in Mr. Watts's as fresh and as beautiful as the blue carpet under the Princess's feet?

So the result of our criticism has been to find Mr. Watts deficient in every branch of his craft, and yet a man whose genius is incontestable. How this is I confess myself embarrassed to explain: Mr. Watts's demerits are more obvious than his merits. I will suggest that the charm of his work proceeds from the man's noble comprehension of

things, and from an ever present desire to see life exalted with high aspiration. However Mr. Watts may paint, his work is free from the base and the mean. He has not, I think, achieved anything that the future will value as much as Sir John Millais' "Eve of St. Agnes," "Ophelia," and "Autumn Leaves"; but he has never descended so low as "Bubbles" and "Chill October." Of this generation of Englishmen these two men are the greatest, and if one thought too much about the future, the other did not think about it enough. G. M.

### THE WEEK.

MR. MORLEY, it appears, has been employing some of his leisure, as Chief Secretary, in looking up some of the State papers in Dublin Castle. We do not suppose MR. MORLEY, while in Ireland, has very much leisure for this or any other gentle pursuit; but a few very brief glances should be enough to convince him that there is a veritable treasure for both the literary man and the historian in these Dublin Castle papers. Not only may the history of the Union be re-written from them, but they are full of striking personal stories, versions of romantic incidents and revelations of character which a novelist would deem invaluable. Amongst other things, there is a certain dark and dramatic story relating to EMMET'S trial, the proofs of which his relatives have long believed to have been sealed up in one of those boxes in the Birmingham Tower, whose contents MR. MORLEY is now examining. Many a strange secret is sure to come out of these boxes once an uncompromising truth-seeker chooses to let in the light.

WE suppose it is the favour with which DR. BOYD'S reminiscences were received that has led to the publication within the last few weeks of half a dozen similar books. The immediate cause, that is to say. One must go farther afield, and dig a little deeper for the roots of the reminiscential undergrowth which has overrun English literature repeatedly during the latter half of this century. To mention the name of DR. GORDON HAKE, whose "Memoirs of Eighty Years" (BENTLEY) is the latest addition to the list of semi-autobiographic matter published while the writers are still alive, and that of A. K. H. B. in the same breath with the "New Journalism" may seem at first too ridiculous. And yet we think it is not foolhardy to pronounce the genteel gossip of these cultured gentlemen of the same order as the more voluble and sometimes less refined personal matter of some of the younger daily and weekly periodicals. It is the age of publicity; the extension of the franchise has made the people king, and everybody from Prime Minister to JACK PUDDING appeals to CÆSAR; some with reason, many simply because it is the fashion. Indeed, one is sometimes inclined to regard this habit of forestalling death with autobiographies, memoirs, reminiscences, interviews, as a species of panic. "As the world grows fuller," people seem to say, "the chance of our being remembered decreases. Our journals, our note-books, they will burn them or let the rats eat them when we are dead. Nobody will know the things we said, and the things that were said of us; the lofty contempt we had for So-and-So, who thought himself such a big man, and the high regard in which that other truly great personality held us. Unless we make a stir now we shall be forgotten. Let us get reporters to put paragraphs about us in newspapers; invite interviewers to interview us; bring out our journals ourselves; let us publish, publish, publish! for the night cometh when no man can publish. Let us appeal to the great public at once; posterity will know nothing of us unless we start an echo now." One would think that a belief in any immortality except that of a page in the "Dictionary of National Biography" had died out in England altogether.

AN autobiography not born out of due time is that of WILLIAM BELL SCOTT (OSGOOD, McILVAINE). This handsome two-volume book is edited by MR. MINTO, and amply illustrated with etchings by SCOTT himself and in collaboration with his friends. The full title is "Autobiographical Notes of the Life of William Bell Scott, and Notices of the Artistic and Poetic Circle of Friends, 1830-1882." We are glad to see that MESSRS. OSGOOD, McILVAINE & Co. have reissued the translation of HÉLÈNE VACARESCO'S "Bard of the Dimbovitza."

BORROVIANS, or even those who, without being quite Borrovians, have enjoyed MR. BIRRELL'S delightful essay on the author of "The Bible in Spain" in "Res Judicata," will experience some disillusion on reading the anecdotes concerning him which appear in DR. GORDON HAKE'S book. If DR. HAKE'S memory is to be trusted, BORROW was a most unpleasant creature, ill-mannered, and ill-tempered to a rare degree. When MISS AGNES STRICKLAND was introduced to him, she asked his permission to send him a copy of her "Queens of England." He exclaimed: "For God's sake, don't, madam; I should not know where to put them or what to do with them." Then he rose, "fuming, as was his wont when offended," and said to a friend, "What a d— fool that woman is!" This is given as a characteristic specimen, but we are reluctant so to take it. The author of those immortal passages on "The bruisers of England" and "The horses of the Moslems" must have had more sympathetic traits than this would show. BORROW, by the way, is still a force in militant controversy. We met him recently, freely quoted, in one of those raw-head-and-bloody-bones pamphlets in which the Church of Rome is proved to be the Beast of the Apocalypse.

OUR Copenhagen correspondent writes:—That the path of genius is not always strewn with roses is, alas, no new experience. Still it must be a matter of surprise and regret when, in a cultured and art-loving community, a man of great and undisputed genius is absolutely suffering for want of the ordinary necessities of life. This, it has recently transpired, is the case with AUGUST STRINDBERG, probably the most gifted writer in Sweden at present. He has quite recently sent a letter to a friend, himself a well-known writer, which gives a most pathetic description of his position. He has had the bailiffs in twice, is in debt, and cannot get away on account of his creditors. It is autumn, but he is still forced to remain in the country. He has six plays ready, but the Radical tendency of his earlier plays has closed the Swedish theatres against him. In Berlin he thinks they might be produced—in any case published. How is he, he asks, to get away from "this hell"? If he only had a £10 note, he would go away. In order to simply exist, he has painted several pictures and sold them—of course, at wretched prices. He is contemplating becoming a photographer—in order to save his talent as an author. He beseeches his friend to help him somehow, adding that he would have "brought about an ending," had it not been for the children (whom he is not allowed to see, being divorced from his wife, who has the charge of them). Money has since been sent to STRINDBERG, who, it is hoped, will in Germany find at least a temporary home and a kinder fate.

LOOKING over a number of the illustrated books that are beginning to appear with the approach of the Christmas season, one is painfully struck with the extensive and demoralising influence among them of "process." Most of the publishers this year, whether because of the depression of trade, or because the temptation of cheapness is too irresistible, have gone in for "process" illustrations where formerly they would have given us woodcuts. Indeed, it would seem as if the taste for artistically illustrated books were in danger of disappearing for a



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spell before the fatal facility with which books illustrated indifferently can now be produced. If the supply is any indication of the demand, the taste is already all but gone. Nine out of every ten of the story-books of the hour are "process" illustrated.

THE effect on the artists is distressing. You sometimes see remarkable skill baffled by the mechanical, or rather, the chemical, exigencies of a medium they have not yet mastered. Take the illustrations to MR. LANG'S "Green Fairy Book" for example: there the artist exhibits great cleverness and artistic ingenuity and occasional fine drawing, but the solid blots of black, and the other crude tricks by which it is necessary to "support" the "process," utterly ruin the art of the thing. Black-and-white art can hardly escape serious injury from such an experience until at any rate black-and-white artists acquire a better mastery of the new material. Process, like photography, is too handy an invention not to have come to stay, and no doubt each year will see its capacities extended. Artists must learn to suit their style to it. MR. PHIL MAY, for example, has found a style thoroughly expressive and true, which "process" is fully able to render. Its effects, it is true, are neither complex nor very fine, but in its present stage it is clear that complex and fine effects are those to which "process" is not equal.

DUTCH literature has suffered a great loss in the recent death of MR. J. H. HOOYER. From 1876 onward he was a constant contributor to *De Gids*. His literary and critical essays—the best of them studies of foreign writers, such as DAUDET, GEORGE ELIOT, TOLSTOI—were perhaps less original and characteristic than the short stories and sketches, humorous and pathetic, which have from time to time appeared in that periodical.

OF Dutch magazines. They are not so well-known on this side of the water as, for the most part, they deserve. The veteran *Guide* (*De Gids*) is the vehicle of solid reading, literary criticism, and high-class fiction. Both North and South Netherlands are represented in its pages. MAX ROOSES, the Antwerp art-critic, is a frequent contributor, and the poetry—at least the best of it—is furnished by HÉLÈNE EWARTH and P. DE MONT, both Belgians. This month's issue has an appreciative and sympathetic study of TENNYSON, from the pen of CHARLES BOISSEVAIN. "England," remarks this writer, "shines out, to my mind, as the Poets' Corner of Europe." This article is followed by a very accurate and not infelicitous translation of the "Coming of Arthur," over the signature—a pseudonym, we believe—SOCRA RANA.

IN a paper recently read before the Society of Chemical Industry DR. CHARLES DREYFUS calls attention to the revolution now taking place in chemical manufactures owing to the introduction of new coke-ovens in France and Germany. Till recently the coke for ironworks was entirely prepared by processes which involved the loss of the most valuable bye-products in the shape of gas, benzene, anthracene, etc. As fifteen million tons of coal are "coked" in this country alone for metallurgical purposes (ordinary gas-coke being useless in this case), the waste has been enormous. With the new HOFFMANN-OTTO and SEMET-SOLVAY furnaces it appears that gas for lighting and heating purposes, benzene, etc., and coke for the iron-masters, can all be made at the same time economically. The result of the introduction of comparatively few of such furnaces has been to reduce the price of benzene 50 per cent.

If housekeepers are in earnest in wishing to benefit the unemployed in East London, they should buy BRYANT & MAY'S Matches, and refuse the foreign matches which are depriving the workers in East London of a large amount in weekly wages.

The general public will be more interested in looking forward to the cheap coke and gas, by the combined use of which in our domestic fires we may hope in the immediate future to diminish the smoke-cloud and fog which hang over our big towns.

THE Jew is looking up as a personage in literature. MR. BEERBOHM TREE has been telling the Maccabæans' Club that he means shortly to produce a play in which every character is Jewish. The adaptation of this play from the German is to be entrusted to MR. ZANGWILL, who recently wrote a flattering book on "The Children of the Ghetto." There was present at the same dinner of the Maccabæans MR. HAROLD FREDERIC, whose recent book on the Jews in Russia has been found acceptable to the race. The late MISS AMY LEVY'S "Reuben Sachs" is one of the cleverest of modern stories—though it is strange that the Gentile pens should be somewhat kindlier to what MR. BEERBOHM TREE calls the "splendid vices" of the race than the keen stylus of one of their own.

AMONG the deaths announced since our last issue are those of the RIGHT REV. W. P. AUSTIN, D.D., for the last fifty years Bishop of British Guiana; GENERAL DE FAILLY, the French commander at Mentana, and one of those captured at Sedan; GENERAL BERTOLE VIALE, who held important administrative posts during the Austro-Italian wars of 1860 and 1866, and was War Minister both in 1867 and in the Cabinet of SIGNOR CRISPI; SEÑOR WALDO SILVA, head of the Junta in the late Chilean Revolution; DR. KARL PETERSEN, a leading statesman of the free city of Hamburg, lately its Burgomaster, and once its Foreign Minister; GENERAL SAMUEL W. CRAWFORD, of Pennsylvania, an actor in and a historian of the American War of Secession; the HON. W. N. JOCELYN, British Chargé d'Affaires at Darmstadt; and MR. THOMAS ADOLPHUS TROLLOPE, the elder brother of the novelist, and who will be remembered less by his novels than by his many and valuable contributions to Italian history.

#### A CLEVER STORY.

HE had just gone, and the girl stood looking dizzily at the door through which he had passed, her fingers fast in her hair, as if holding herself down bodily lest she should float up off the commonplace floor and soar away into space. She would have broken out into singing if only she could have got her breath. She had had to turn the man out, that was why she was so happy. There are few things so delightful to a woman as to exert her whole strength to keep off the crisis and find it coming on even faster for her efforts—every woman would rather love her conqueror than her captive. This girl felt as triumphant as Atalanta when she was beaten in the race, for a man had made her love him against her will, and she knew that next evening he would come and tell her so.

She had disliked this man very much when first she had met him. If anyone had asked her what was the most impossible thing on earth—so far as she was concerned—she might have answered "That I should come to like Mr. Woodhill." What an idiot she had been!

And that was not the worst of it. She had been more than an idiot—she had been spiteful as well as stupid. And the trouble which she had somehow pushed out of her mind—ever since it had ceased to be a joke and become a trouble—rose up now and worried her. She could not enjoy her present intoxication because of it. It was like the thought of the headache next morning.

She drew a magazine from the middle of a pile of magazines, and it opened of itself at a story. She read it—shrivelling up and cringing as she read. How could she have been so vindictive, so mean?

What, meet a man in a friend's house, and ridicule him in print! The thing was shameful!

It was a clever story—even the editor had said so. She had taken the manuscript to the office herself, and he had looked through it in her presence. He was a very jaded, storyworn editor, but he had quite awakened to liveliness and interest over this story. "It's really not so bad as some," he had said, growing fulsome, for an editor, in his enthusiasm. "Is it real life?" And she had said "Yes," and told him of the disagreeable man she had met, and how she had promptly made use of an unpleasing experience.

That was what she had called the action then; now she called it "taking mean revenge on a man for seeming indifferent to her." It was too horrible to think of; so all this while she had refused to think of it. She flung the magazine back at the heap and went to bed.

But she could not escape from the story. It followed her and arranged itself in a series of impressive *tableaux*. She saw that story wreck her married life in at least fifteen different ways. She saw the jealous girl whom he did not marry send it anonymously for him to read at the breakfast-table. She saw him picking up just that number of the magazine at some inn on their honeymoon and beginning to read to her kindly because she was tired: carelessly at first, and then on and on cruelly to the end, while she was powerless to stop him. She saw an unspoken, intangible coldness rising between them, and dividing them year by year, until one day, at the end of a quarrel, when she had been trying to make him believe that she had not done, or said, or meant, whatever it was they were quarrelling about, he had flung the story at her, saying, "Madam, the woman who is capable of that is capable of anything!" She saw them both grown old, ready to creep peacefully into the grave together, but separated at the very end of life by that dreadful story.

The clock striking one struck an idea into her mind. The Post Office at the corner of the street was cleared at two. She rose, and ran into her sitting-room; it was bright morning there. She snatched the magazine off the pile, and, turning to her writing-desk—quite regardless of the Post Office regulations—she scrawled a message on the cover:—"Before you decide to have anything more to do with me, I want you to know that I have written this."

She tied the magazine savagely with a great deal of string, and, slipping back to her bedroom, hurried on just enough clothing for propriety, crept downstairs, and ran out to the post; then she went back to bed and slept.

Woodhill got the packet at breakfast-time. He read the message on the cover and then the story. It was a very pretty little story, but just a trifle what conventional people call "advanced"—the sort of story which more than anything else measures to a man the extent of a good woman's ignorance. If she only knew one or two of the stories he knew! He remembered her once telling him that some of her stories were "advanced." She had spoken very seriously, as if quite prepared for him to be shocked. Dear child! if she never "advanced" any farther than this, she would not come to much harm.

Still it was fit that she should be penitent over this story, he would not have discouraged such a feeling for worlds. He was glad she had sent it through the post, and not shown it to him herself, with a visible expectation that he would be horrified, because he might have laughed, and then she would have been hurt and enlightened.

Still laughing he sent her a telegram.

"Don't fret, but don't write any more like it. We won't ever speak of it again. I shall be with you this evening."

Helen was asleep when the telegram was brought to her, so she was spared the wretchedness of waking to last night's stale worry. The reckless expenditure

of unnecessary halfpennies went straight to her heart, she could look forward to the evening untroubled.

Woodhill was a charming lover, he was so openly proud of his position, and he was not jealous of her work—indeed, he was proud of that also. He used to bore all his friends by sending them her writings, and he liked to take her copy into the offices.

One day he met one of her editors, and found he had known him some time, not as an editor, but as a club acquaintance, with whom he had held several long and more or less intimate discussions.

He was an interesting editor, with dusty red hair, and a habit of wrinkling his eyebrows right up into it. He wrinkled them quite out of sight when he saw Woodhill in the office.

"You haven't begun, have you?" he said with courteous discouragement.

Woodhill explained that he had brought Helen's copy, and, as a natural corollary, his engagement to her. The editor did not wrinkle his eyebrows, he only shut his mouth; but that was expressive enough.

Woodhill said "Eh?" in answer to the expression.

"There are plenty of girls to marry. Why need you spoil a story-writer?"

Woodhill laughed. "Oh, she won't give up writing!"

"They all say that. Her work has been falling off in quality lately. She used to be observant; now she is optimistic. That is your fault, I suppose. We had a story of hers some six months ago that was really clever. I read it myself more than once. It fascinated me. See here!" And he handed Woodhill a back number of the magazine.

Woodhill glanced at the pages—then read carefully. There was no mistaking who had been the original of the man in that story. The writer had not meant that there should be any mistake. It was a very clever piece of work. That was the worst of it. To do such a thing badly would have been merely amusing; to do it well was unpardonable. An angry outburst of resentment he could have overlooked—been almost pleased to overlook—but not this clever and light-hearted dissection of himself. There are so many things a woman may say to a man and be forgiven; but there are a few things even a woman may not say, and Helen had said them. It was no extenuation that she had meant to confess the wrong she had done him—or seemed too mean to confess it; for he was quite ready to think that she had sent the wrong magazine because she did not dare to send the right one, and wished to protect herself against the consequences of future discovery by a semblance of honesty. Unknowingly his thoughts took the tone Helen's fancies had attributed to him. A woman capable of that is capable of any treachery. He knew he should never forgive her. It was not a matter of choice. He would have preferred to forgive her had it been possible to him, but he knew it would not be possible.

The editor looked up. "Well? You can't often get that sort of thing from a woman; they like imagining better than observing; but that girl just keeps those eyes of hers open, and when she sees anything ridiculous she knows how to set it down."

"You know that this is an experience, then?"

"Yes, I asked her about it. She met some brute who was rude to her, and worked him up into a story. Good, isn't it?"

"Very good. Did she tell you the man's name? It would make some difference whether she told you his name or not."

"No," said the editor, speaking very slowly, and not wrinkling his eyebrows at all, "she did not tell me his name."

It only needed that. Woodhill took the copy of the magazine away with him, and then remembered that it was quite unnecessary to send it to Helen, so he sent a letter.

"I have seen the story you would have sent me.



You are right in supposing I should not have cared  
to come to you that evening had I seen it. Do not  
expect me to-night,"

NORA VYNNE.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

### LIBERAL APATHY.

SIR,—In the current number of the *Nineteenth Century* Mrs. Jocelyn Bagot tells the story of "A North Country Election." The story is in no way remarkable for new facts or for anecdotes by any means fresh from a North Country point of view. Such as they are, they might have been told—in which case, however, they would have been told with more incisive point—by Brougham when, in the first half of the century, he contested Westmorland. But Mrs. Bagot's story is that of a successful candidate's wife, and so far is pleasant enough reading; and yet the Tory victory in South Westmorland was neither an unexpected nor, in its way, a very glorious one.

Last week Lord Hothfield, the President of the North Westmorland Liberal Association, spoke in very plain and painful terms of the Liberal apathy, to which in great part he attributed the defeats. Official Liberalism he denounced as being perfectly indifferent to the fortune of this Northern constituency, and he refused to continue his leadership of the Association when the party in London showed so unmistakably its utter carelessness of what that Association achieved. The National Liberal Federation as an institution, Mr. Schnadhorst as an official, and Ministers as a body, were rebuked for their persistent refusal or neglect to lend a helping hand to a struggling minority. Lord Hothfield, the late candidate, and his election agents, all spoke to the enormous difficulty of obtaining oratorical assistance from headquarters or elsewhere. It was said that M.P.'s trooped gladly to large centres when speakers addressed audiences numbered by their thousands. In constituencies where the adverse majority was insuperable the Federation was willing to lend all the aid in its power, in the mere hope of reducing that majority and claiming a "moral" victory; but in such cases as that of North Westmorland, where meetings are held in small villages with audiences numbering often not more than forty voters, it was not considered worth while to waste eloquence in the attempt to win over a paltry ten votes.

Now, I do not believe that in any county in England does good speaking—by which I mean a flow of language—"go down" better than in Westmorland. Eloquence is not native to the soil, but as an exotic it is highly prized; and if a speech can win a vote anywhere, it will win it in Westmorland. Moreover, in '85 and '86 there were splendid prospects of a Liberal victory in this constituency, and if it be true that the presence of one or two speakers of the first rank would have meant the difference between winning and losing the seat, it does seem a little strange that Mr. Schnadhorst or Mr. Arnold Morley could not have been induced to see to it.

The fact, however, is indisputable that Westmorland, for some cause or other, has been systematically neglected by prominent Liberal speakers. In 1880 Sir Henry Taylor on one occasion had the powerful assistance of the late Mr. W. E. Forster, and on another the help of Lord (then Sir Farrer) Herschell, but this was the beginning and end of outside aid. In '85 and '86 Sir James Whitehead was practically left to fight the battle alone, and in the present year Mr. Tuffin, with the exception of the member for Leicester, Mr. Gully, Q.C., and Sir Wilfrid Lawson, was, in spite, he says, of frequent promises from headquarters, left equally in the lurch.

Help should have been forthcoming from headquarters.—  
Faithfully yours,  
Ambleside, Nov. 9. J. C. SHEPHERD.

### MR. BURNE JONES AND THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—Your art critic "G. M." is in error on a matter of fact, and as everybody knows the relationship between fact and theory, I am afraid his little error vitiates the argument he propounds with so much vigour. It was *after*, and not *before*, his election as an associate that Mr. Burne Jones made his solitary appearance as an exhibitor at the Royal Academy.—Yours truly,  
R. I.

### A MIDNIGHT HARVEST.

#### COENISH COAST.

THE white, white gulls wheel inland,  
The breakers rake and grind;  
The swagging clouds go swiftly  
With a shattering gale behind;  
What are the white gulls crying  
Above the ripened corn?

"O, harvest will be over  
Before the morrow's morn:  
No need to whet the sickle,  
No need to bring the wain,  
The storm shall reap on the cliff-side steep,  
And the west wind thresh the grain."

The white, white gulls whirl gaily,  
They keep a merry coil,  
But the farmer's heart is heavy  
For all his months of toil:  
He hears the white gulls' chorus,  
Their cries of joyous scorn:  
"O, harvest will be over  
Or ever comes the morn:  
Now go you to your bed, Farmer,  
Lie down and take your ease;  
The wind shall reap while you rest and sleep,  
And the storm shall scour the leas."

The white, white foam flies upward,  
The black rocks show their teeth,  
Dark frowns the towering headland  
They grin and gird beneath;  
What are the wild gulls crying  
Far up the valleys grey?  
"Hey for the midnight harvest,  
The merry breakers' play!  
There'll be harvest out at sea, Farmer,  
And harvest here on land:  
There'll be rare ripe grain for the hungry main,  
And drowned folk for the strand."

GRAHAM R. TOMSON.

### A LITERARY CAUSERIE.

#### THE SPEAKER OFFICE,

Friday, November 18th, 1892.

IF the Decadence is to be decadent it must sink and sink; but I know not how it is to descend lower than the awful volume of verse which is the craze of the moment in Paris. The copy of "*Dans la Rue: chansons et monologues; par Aristide Bruant*," which is in my hands, came over from Paris at the first start-off of the book's existence, yet it was already one of the eighteenth thousand. M. Bruant is enjoying a success which is simply phenomenal; that of Mr. Rudyard Kipling's "*Barrack Room Ballads*" does not approach it. What kind of readers the verses appeal to is another question. But the volume is not cheap; it costs as much to buy as would a new book of poems by M. Sully Prudhomme or M. François Coppée. It is idle Paris, it is the world of Bohemian readers with money in their pockets, who are purchasing this new poet by the tens of thousands. It is really worth while, when so much is being written and talked about poetry in England, to see what verse it is that appeals to the centre of civilisation, to *tout Paris*. Without being the least bit of a moralist, I confess I shudder.

For if a horrible book ever proceeded from the brain of a perfectly sane man, it is "*Dans la Rue*." Let me explain at once that it is not, in any direct sense, obscene. It makes no sort of appeal to the luxurious passions. It is not, I suppose, what any French authority would see its way to suppress. Every now and then some young Parisian poet, tempted by the April blood in the veins and by the desire for advertisement, kicks over the very loose French traces, and perpetrates a "schoking" book of poems. That is a very familiar phenomenon. Nineteen years ago M. Jean Richepin produced his famous "*La Chanson des Gueux*," for which the Government of le Seize-Mai indulged him, if I remember right, with a fortnight's imprisonment. But the muse of M. Bruant is not one of those soiled doves of Parnassus. She has but three haunts—Batignolles

and La Villette and St. Lazare—and her only study is to interpret the instincts of the lowest rough, from his gutter-cradle to his death under the guillotine. M. Bruant, who, I am informed, nightly recites and sings his pieces of poetry to gloating crowds of well-dressed people, is a writer of some real talent. Under his flood of slang, under his outrages of prosody, there seems to lie a genuine singing gift. He is not the first comer; he has the requisite talent, since, even in the Paris of to-day, it is not enough to be merely vile and brutal—one must as well be clever.

It is a difficult task to give a decent and yet a true impression of "Dans la Rue." In the only touch of personality which I find from cover to cover, in the only sign of the knowledge that any other world than the criminal world exists, the author (in the person of one of his bullies) cries:—

"À bas la romance et l'idylle,  
Les oiseaux, la forêt, le buisson,  
Des marlous de la grande ville  
Nous allons chanter la chanson."

The scene of the successive poems is the street empty at midnight, the back of the fortifications at dusk, a deserted square on a very rainy night—the various hunting-grounds of the Parisian tiger-jackal.

The hero of "Dans la Rue" is that Toto Laripette whom we have so often met with before in the police columns of the Parisian newspapers. He is not yet twenty, he does not know who his parents are, he is *joli garçon* in the eyes of the woman who supports him, since he has two little bright eyes like a mouse, and little curly whiskers—

"De son métier i' faisait rien,  
Dans l' jour i' balladait son chien,"

but his real avocation must be left to the lady herself to describe—

"Quéqu'fois, quand j' faisais les boulevards,  
I' dégringolait les pochards,  
Avec le p'tit homme à Toinette,  
À la Villette."

Usually the unhappy drunkard, or elderly citizen, is laid by the heels, and, having been quietly robbed of everything, is left with a kick. But sometimes Toto himself, or Toinette's little man, sees red, and then it is a squalid corpse that the gendarmes discover in the morning. So that, sooner or later, Nemesis is apt to descend on Toto and take him off to La Roquette, where he looks through a little window while the grim steel descends upon his youthful neck. It is this tendency to be guillotined that he regards as the bitter drop in his otherwise pleasant cup.

M. Bruant is the poet of *soutenage* and nocturnal murder, and he records the sentiments of the male and female accomplices with a horrible gusto. The extremely clever designs by M. Steinlen which accompany the poems form a commentary upon and expand them. The allegory on p. 63 is typical of the book. A meagre figure of Love, nude, with bristling wings, rides a magnified five-franc piece in mad career down-hill. Behind him rushes an endless black procession made up of groups of girls who dance round foolish elderly men, while Toto, with his knife behind his arm, creeps up to give each old fool the one needful stab in the ribs. Through vast entangled spiders' webs, attended by parallel processions of cats and mice, all stung to madness by the music of Love's guitar, this loathsome mob spins and surges along.

There are moments, however, as the English poet has expressed it, when "the burglar is not occupied in burgling," and when even Alphonse-Toto is relieved from that scarlet mist before his eyes that is eventually so awkward for the health of his neck-bone. On those days he restrains himself from beating Rosa; allows her to *faire ses boulevards* in peace;

and shares with her the money she makes in the most amiable manner on drink, or even in taking her to "voir jouer l'drame ou l'vaud'ville, à Belleville." Then he feels himself to be really a good man; then he is ready to admit that to send Rosa to trot after a tipsy old man, and to stab him and rifle his pockets when she has safely convoyed him under a solitary lamp-post, is a regrettable foible; then he desires to live the serene and pastoral life of a bully, at peace with all men, for—

"C'est comm' ça qu' c'est l' vrai moyen  
D' dev'nir un bon citoyen :  
On grandit, sans s' fair' de bile  
À Bell'ville,  
On cri' : Viv' l' Indépendance !  
On a l' cœur bath et content,  
Et l'on nag' dans l'abondance  
À Ménilmontant."

But we are never sure of being able to recapture these noble moments, and Toto does not pretend to live habitually at this height. More often his mode of life may be summed up in these eloquent stanzas, which—veiled in the speech of Toto—may, I trust, give no offence:—

"C'est Rosa. . . j' sais pas d' où qu'a 'vient.  
Alle a l' poil roux, eun' têt' de chien. . .  
Quand a passe on dit : v'là la Rouge,  
À Montrouge.  
Quand a' tient l'michet dan' un coin,  
Moi j'suis à côté. . . pas b'en loin. . .  
Et l' lend'main l'sergot trouv' du rouge  
À Montrouge."

Such is this comic book of prostitution and murder. I dare not indicate in decent English print what are features in it which are even darker than those on which I have dwelt. The most popular volume of poems published this season in France is splashed with mire and spotted with blood. In absolute cynicism, without a touch of pathos or of reserve, it reveals the blackness of the blackest class in Paris. That it is, after a fashion, true, I cannot doubt. As I write this, I see in my French newspaper once more the usual story—the decoy-child who begs for a cigarette, the foolish old man who trots under the lamp-post, Toto and his pal with their knives under his ribs, the empty pockets trailing in the cold pool of blood. But what is the meaning of taking this horrible class of crime as the theme for an entire volume of poems, with illustrations, with music, with the gifted author reciting tasty passages, and the whole thing a mad sensation?

The literary excuse made for it, most likely, will be the example of Villon. That great poet, five hundred years ago, was one of a band of malefactors, probably a murderer, certainly a bully. If the Alphonse of La Grosse Margot and the friend of Colin de Cayeux is to live in poetry, why should not Toto Laripette possess a laureate? I think the answer is very clear. Even if it be denied that literature has grown in five centuries more decent and more sensitive than it was in the days of Huguette du Hamel, at least it must be claimed that the true charm of Villon's verses does not consist in their shameless avowals, but in the flashes of human tenderness which light up the gloom of the moral squalor. It is the absence of anything like humanity, the gross and utter contentment in a sordid picture of vice unredeemed by pity or passion, which make these latest manifestations of Parisian literary eccentricity so appalling. Even if Toto Laripette were painted as a human being, there would be a difficulty in accepting so too-faithful a portrait of him; but when he is a mere horror of cupidity, laziness, and cruelty, it is really not enough to assure us that it is under that aspect alone that the tribunals of the Seine present him to us.

As for the thousands of readers and the hundreds of auditors who follow the fortunate M. Aristide



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Bruant—what is to be said of them? He is, after his lights, a sort of artist—but what of his admirers? Is this not—this violent delight in crude recitals of treacherous crime and cowardly vice—a very terrible sign of morbidity? The intellectual palate must be jaded indeed when nothing can stir it to enjoyment short of monologues in which a murderer describes his procedure, and lyrics in which his woman appeals to him from the captivities of St. Lazare. I have never sympathised with those who cheaply denounce the literary life of Paris. To turn from it to our narrow world of letters in London is to resign the professional for the amateur. But "*Dans la Rue*" is a bitter pill for the lovers of France to swallow. It is one of many signs which tend to show that, underneath so much that is lucid and delicate and brilliant in the intellectual life of Paris, there is an ever-swell-ing tide of brutality which is infinitely dangerous to European civilisation. M. Bruant's poems form the worst, the most flaring, of these signs of decay which has crossed my path. A Frenchman who knows more of his own country than any of us can learn has lately said, "*Je crois à la fatale et imminente putré-faction d'une latinité sans Dieu et sans symbole.*" It would have been pleasanter for us to have been born witnesses of the advent of a new Alfred de Vigny or of a second Chateaubriand; but, since the gods have given us M. Bruant for our sins, let us at least hope that a mighty reaction may be close at hand.

EDMUND GOSSE.

## REVIEWS.

### MAHDISM AND THE SUDAN.

TEN YEARS' CAPTIVITY IN THE MAHDI'S CAMP, 1882-1892. From the Original Manuscripts of Father Joseph Ohrwalder, late Priest of the Austrian Mission Station at Delen in Kordofan. By Major F. R. Wingate, R.A. With Maps and Illustrations by Walter C. Horsley. London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co.

THE events of the Mahdi's rebellion were till now largely matters of speculation. He had no special correspondents in his camp, and during his encounters with civilised forces defeat was almost uniformly the fate of his opponents. So the outside world was not able to penetrate within the circle of darkness which concealed his movements while the strength of the rebellion lasted. Spies tried and failed. A light-hearted Frenchman, full of journalistic zeal, set out gaily to interview the Mahdi, and was heard of no more: his mournful end is told in this book. During the last few years fugitives occasionally found their way to Egypt, but they were as a rule ignorant and unobservant natives. Major Wingate suddenly throws a flood of light right into the heart of the dark chapter of the history of the Sudan by publishing Father Ohrwalder's grim and thrilling story. No one could do it better, and the volume before us comprises within its 460 pages as much of new modern history, as much bloodshed and adventure, as fine a record of simple courage and heroic endurance, as might give body to a whole library of fiction. Father Ohrwalder tells his story in the first person, and tells it with a calmness and self-restraint, with an absence of sensationalism and sentimentality, that make the book admirable as a work of art, while the man stands out as a hero of the quietest and most human type.

The story in outline is as follows:—In 1880 Father Ohrwalder, a young missionary priest, travelled by Sawakin to Khartum, and early in the following year proceeded to found a station at Delen in Dar Nuba, between Kordofan and Darfur. The mission prospered for a year, and the Nubas were rapidly becoming good workmen, when the first news of the Mahdi's revolt arrived. The utter incapacity of the Egyptian officers and troops had allowed the fanatical dervish Mohammed Ahmed to acquire a reputation for valour in battle. The slave-dealers flocked to his support, the allegiance of the Baggaras or river Arabs

was rapidly won, and the Mahdi, as this dervish styled himself, claimed the power of turning the Egyptian bullets into water. Each success of the dervishes raised the Mahdi's reputation. The austerity of his private life at that time and the sternness of his justice threw all the best elements of a religious war in his favour. One by one the Egyptian stations were submerged by the seething flood of fanatics which spread on all sides; the officers either joined the dervishes or were made prisoners; the men and even the women were for the most part massacred. The Mahdi, whom Ohrwalder found a man of considerable personal attractions, elected four Khalifas to assist in the command of his army, which was formed in three divisions, thoroughly officered and rigidly disciplined. In September, 1882, the mission at Delen was broken up, and the priests and nuns sent to the Mahdi's camp at El Obeid, which he was then besieging. The sufferings that followed it would be vain to attempt to relate; indeed, Father Ohrwalder's own ghastly pages obviously and necessarily tell but a small part of the horrors of slavery in the Mahdi's prisons. After the fall of El Obeid the Mahdi relaxed his austere rules; he became addicted to wine, and his harem engrossed more and more of his time; he was universally accepted as divine after the terrible massacre of Hicks Pasha's army in November, 1883. Gordon's letter to the Mahdi offering to recognise him as Sultan of the Western Sudan produced a most undesirable effect. The Mahdi was already in full command of the Sudan; he knew that Gordon had no European troops with him, and, sending a contemptuous answer, he proceeded to the siege of Khartum, with the result we already know. The years passed on in terrible misery for the prisoners, many of whom were fortunate enough to die. In Omdurman, where Ohrwalder was detained for several years, the horror was deepened by a frightful famine in 1888-89; and everywhere the rule of Khalifa Abdullah, who succeeded to power on the Mahdi's death, gave rise to fear, and more than once to open insurrection. At length, by means of a faithful Arab guide, who had been sent out by the Roman Catholic Archbishop at Cairo, Ohrwalder and two surviving nuns escaped on camels in the end of December, 1891. After a forced march across the desert, the account of which makes one hold one's breath to read, they safely reached Korosko and the steamer for Cairo. The book should be read by all who love adventure. It is like a story of the Middle Ages, with the weapons of modern warfare superimposed on the savagery of mediæval fanatics.

Gordon's defence of Khartum was, in Father Ohrwalder's opinion, hopeless from the first; the only chance of safety for the Europeans was to withdraw before the communications were cut. This is now an old story. The power of Mahdism is gone, and affairs in the Sudan are gradually settling, through a period of stormy tribal battles, into a state of more stable equilibrium.

### DOWN THE DANUBE.

PADDLES AND POLITICS DOWN THE DANUBE. By Poultney Bigelow. London: Cassell & Co.

IN this lively little volume Mr. Bigelow has collected some sketches of travel in Hungary and the Balkan States, together with the notes of a keen observer on some important currents of political opinion. Mr. Bigelow made the voyage down the Danube in a canoe, and he enjoys the distinction of being the first navigator to pass through the Iron Gates in so light a craft. The rapids of the St. Lawrence, he says, "bear no comparison with those of the Iron Gates for difficulty to the canoeist," and it is plain enough from Mr. Bigelow's narrative that to paddle safely through these waters needs a cool head and a very expert hand. Crossing a whirlpool, for instance, is an experience which to the uninitiated reader must enhance the virtues of *terra firma*. Mr.

Bigelow thought it expedient to trust to the speed of his canoe to skim across the top of the whirlpool "before the savage monster could make up its mind to swallow me." This experiment was successful, though "there was always an uncomfortable deviation from the course suggesting an incipient rotation." Perhaps this will excite the ambition of the canoeist who knows no river monsters more savage than are to be found in the "Backs" at Cambridge. It will agitate him to learn that unless he makes haste his opportunity may be lost, for engineers are preparing to blast a deep channel along the Servian shore, for the navigation of large vessels at all seasons. So Mr. Barry Pain must set off for the Danube without delay if he does not want to disappoint the whirlpools which are yearning for his Canadian canoe.

But to less ardent sportsmen there are other fascinations on the Danube. It ought to be the paradise of the dancing man. Mr. Bigelow was sailing along, lost in somewhat disconsolate reverie, when he came upon a Hungarian picnic. Handkerchiefs were waved at him, and he hoisted the American flag. This evoked extraordinary demonstrations on shore, and presently Mr. Bigelow discerned that the revellers craved for his company. A few minutes later he was skipping with a damsel to gipsy music, "stamping, shouting, spinning, reeling, swaying, singing, turning and twisting in the dance of dances, the elixir of perpetual youth, the inspiring Tschardasch." Of this pastime we gather nothing more definite than that it exercises all the muscles, and that the dancer is not rigorously limited by technicalities. He disports his limbs in harmony with the inexhaustible buoyancy of the Magyar spirit. Never was there such a picnic, indeed, in the experience of an American tourist whose business it is to feel the pulse of nationalities. Mr. Bigelow was in a social whirlpool in which there was something more than an "incipient rotation." He indulges in a great deal more rapture than we have quoted, including a brief report of a speech he made on this occasion, in which he declared that "heaven must be full of Hungarians," and that he could imagine no greater beatitude than cultivating friendship amongst so happy a people. Then, with a resentful suspicion of criticism, he exclaims, "A cynic might think I was rhapsodising; but, then, who cares what a cynic thinks!" If we might put in a word for the poor cynic, we would suggest that, after all, he has not shared these intoxicating delights. It is a very natural envy which prompts him to cast about for the coldest douche to throw on Mr. Bigelow's enthusiasm. Moreover, we are not all in trim for the Tschardasch, for the spinning and reeling and turning and twisting; and if Mr. Bigelow should read some particularly caustic remark on his performance, he must picture to himself, in common charity, the unfortunate cynic with a great toe swathed in flannels.

In his political researches Mr. Bigelow found everywhere in the Balkan States, even in Servia, a rooted distrust of Russia and an unbounded faith in the German Kaiser. Bulgar and Serb look to Berlin for protection against Russian aggression, and Mr. Bigelow also turns like a devotee towards that somewhat fiery sun. The Kaiser represents to him the modern spirit in Germany as opposed to Prince Bismarck's mediævalism. Perhaps Mr. Bigelow pays too little heed to the Emperor William's arbitrary impulses, to his overweening consciousness of a divine right, which is at least as mediæval as the Bismarckian methods. But any autocratic intelligence seems democratic when compared with the unwieldy barbarism which is the motive power in Russia. Mr. Bigelow bears witness to the universal dislike of the Jew in South-Eastern Europe. "Amidst all classes and all peoples—Poles, Russians, Hungarians, Roumanians, merchants, officials, Nihilists, patriots—even amongst English and Americans doing business in the country, I could find no one who championed the cause of the Jew." An advocate of tolerance, Mr. Bigelow is forced to confess that

the tolerance which shields the Jew is not indigenous in South-Eastern Europe. He found instead the fixed idea that the Hebrew has no country and no honour, only an irresistible greed which would sell any jewel of the soul. This, however, will not convince English or Americans that the code which treats the Jew as a citizen is inapplicable to society on the Danube.

#### SCOTTISH CHURCH HISTORY.

STUDIES IN SCOTTISH HISTORY; CHIEFLY ECCLESIASTICAL. By A. Taylor Innes, Advocate, etc. London: Hodder & Stoughton.

THESE essays are written brilliantly, and from a sufficiently distinctive point of view; but as they are "chiefly ecclesiastical," Scotch ecclesiastical, they are not easily appreciated by any reader who is not familiar with the history of the various kirks and the various conceptions of the true kirk on the other side of the Tweed. Mr. Taylor Innes is a man of considerable culture, literary and philosophical, reared from boyhood in the very thick of all that; and by force of circumstances, apparently, as well as natural bent, almost passionately interested in the ecclesiomachy which distracted the last generation of his countrymen, and may possibly be renewed with bitterness in the near future. To indicate his atmosphere, it may be sufficient to mention that to him Arminianism and Antinomianism are what Newman called "real notions," filled in from personal experience and from history. Not only so, but it would seem that anybody to whom these are not real notions would not be regarded by Mr. Innes as an educated man. "To the uneducated man," he says, "in modern days, Arminianism and Antinomianism are very big words, which he finds himself rather tempted to look down upon. But to the student of history, they stand for permanent tendencies in the nature of man; tendencies which it is no more possible for the human being to escape than it is for the inhabitants of the tropics to escape from the regions south and north of the equator." It would appear from this that we may all be Arminians or the opposite without knowing it; indeed, that we must be of one or the other way of thinking, whether we know the big word and its history or not. It is for those who know it that Mr. Innes writes, and that must necessarily limit the number of his readers.

Mr. Innes is so far like Mr. Freeman that his interest in ecclesiastical history has its origin in modern ecclesiastical politics. In one of the most easily readable of these essays, "The Question Fifty Years Ago," a vigorous and lucid sketch of the conflict that ended in the Disruption of 1843, he recounts how as a boy he witnessed the eviction of his father's minister. The principles for which that minister and scores of others suffered are still firmly held by Mr. Innes, and the chief aim of this volume is to expound and press them—press them as he conceives them to be in their purity. He considers that they have not merely a past, but a future; and it is to help on this future that he resorts to the history of the past. It may be that we are misled by the epigrammatic brilliance of the style. An epigrammatic rhetorician who is also master of his subject is often tempted into allusive paradoxes which severely tax the ordinary layman's powers of interpretation. But if we rightly understand Mr. Innes's essay on Samuel Rutherford, he has been drawn to that worthy not merely by his honeyed evangelical letters, but because he was a brilliant dialectical champion of the true principles of Church government, and because when he had the chance of converting the English people as one of the Westminster Assembly of Divines under the Commonwealth, he failed to secure the triumph of Presbyterianism. The causes of Rutherford's failure Mr. Innes analyses with great subtlety, apparently, as we understand him, with a view to determining whether the failure was a necessary failure, and whether it may not, after all, two



centuries later, be redeemed. We seem to detect this ambition lurking behind Mr. Innes's ingenious arguments and glittering paradoxes; no less an ambition than to help to secure for Presbyterianism what he believes to be its ultimate destiny, "the homage of the world." Our last phrase is his own.

We must confess that we find Mr. Innes's arguments more brilliant than convincing. There is nothing that Scotchmen are fonder of than trying to express the difference between themselves and Englishmen. This is how Mr. Innes puts it. "As a nation we (i.e., the Scotch) have a passion for the form as well as the matter of truth—sometimes, perhaps, rather for the form than the matter. In Scotland the mind acts upon its subject; in England the subject acts upon the mind. And the result is not always in our favour. In Scotland there is at all times more thinking; but perhaps in England there is, upon the whole, more thought. At all events the slow, helpless, instinctive way in which the English mind lies open to a subject or an idea, and lets it grow gradually into its just proportions, produces in the long run some riper and richer intellectual results than any which our more active manipulation has yet to show." We doubt whether this distinction applies generally, but it does precisely characterise Mr. Innes's own essays. The manipulation is too active, and the few ideas in the book are presented in a variety of lights and with a profusion of epigram and enigmatic allusion that is somewhat bewildering. His dialectic does not always quite get down to the subject, and the arguments are too elaborately subtle. His contention, for example, that the Presbyterian dissenters in Scotland, the Frees, the U.P.'s, and the Cameronians, have the only sound title to the Church endowments; that yet they should not try to get them for themselves; that if they think it better to secularise them, they are bound in conscience to secularise them; and that "any Presbyterian who thinks otherwise is not only a little of a heretic but a good deal of a fool," is too bright and fine for the daily food of persuasion, though logically, historically, ethically, and politically it may be sound enough.

#### RUGBY FOOTBALL.

THE RUGBY UNION GAME. Edited by Rev. F. Marshall. London: Cassell & Co.

As the Rugby Union has now reached its majority the editor has deemed this a suitable time for giving a history of the rise and progress of the Rugby game of football. The contributors are intimately acquainted with the departments about which they write, and their work has been executed *con amore*, and with brilliant interest. The editor gives a running sketch of the early history of the game, with its special bearing upon the peculiarities of the Rugby style of play. Rugby football is the modern scientific development of an ancient game at ball. The Romans, who occupied Britain during the early centuries of our era, played at a game called *harpastum* (from the Greek *harpazo*, I seize), evidently learned from the Greek athletes. This game presented the special features of carrying the ball and the scrummage—peculiarities of the Rugby game. From that time a game of ball—passing under the various names of "football," "hurling," "camp-ball," and the like—has always been a popular sport of the lower orders of society; and though such games have differed somewhat from each other, they have all concurred in being "carrying" games. In the parish of Scone, Scotland, on Shrove Tuesday, there was a grand annual contest between the bachelors and married men, but no person was allowed in the game to kick the ball. On the same day in Derby, England, a similar game was engaged in by thousands with tremendous spirit, and often with very sanguinary results. The motion of a vast human tide in the scrummage, without the least regard to consequences, was tremendous. A Frenchman, who once witnessed the broken shins, broken

heads, torn coats, and lost hats during a fearful contest there, remarked that if Englishmen called that *playing*, it would be impossible to say what they would call *fighting*. Other distinctive features of the Rugby game can be traced—as, for instance, the forbidding of the passing forward of the ball; and nowhere can there be found any trace whatever of a game resembling, however remotely, the kicking game of the opposition Association Code. In fact, Mr. Marshall enthusiastically claims the Rugby game as the most ancient of all the popular sports of the present day.

Mr. Arthur G. Guillemard contributes a charming commentary to the famous description of the match Schoolhouse v. School in "Tom Brown's School Days"—in a Bigside at Rugby. Mr. Sydney R. James clearly points out the peculiar features of Eton football in the ordinary "Field" game of the thousand boys, and the more select "Wall" game of the seventy Collegers and thirty Oppidans. The special differences between the Rugby and Harrow games are well explained by an old Harrovian; and an old Wykehamist as determinedly advocates the advantages of the Winchester game. With the exception of these three schools, the Rugby or Association game is universally played.

By far the best article in the excellent volume is by Dr. Almond, of Loretto, on Rugby football in Scottish schools. It is masterly in its treatment, enthusiastic in its support of the game, healthy in its tone, and manly in the discipline engendered in the training for success. Though Scotch school cricket holds a comparatively low place in that summer game, yet in the winter game of football the Scotch schools hold a very high place. During the last twelve years Loretto obtained twenty football "blues," and Fettes fifteen; whilst the two English schools which have been most successful in this respect have only obtained twenty-nine. Rugby football has, in fact, fitted in with the national genius, though it was only introduced in 1855 by Crombie, of Thornton Castle. But since that time it has gradually developed, and taken a firm hold. The Association game is not a possible refuge for Scotch schools. "We are all Rugby," he says, "and Rugby I hope we shall remain; for the defect of the Association game is that it gives no exercise for the upper limbs, and thereby does not tend to the strengthening of the lungs and the equal development of both sides of the person as the Rugby game does." Yet he regards the taking of the ball into the hands only in a free catch or when fairly bounding as too strict a limitation, and as the source of much dispute. He is eloquent in his advocacy of the Rugby game as the best instrument in schools for the development of manly character. Unselfishness is now more fostered by the sacrifice of individual distinction. A player used to play chiefly for his own hand; now he plays for his side. Combined play of forwards is an especially attractive feature; and in that art Merchiston has usually enjoyed an unquestioned pre-eminence. "I have no hesitation in saying that, in recent years, I believe the best football in the world has been played at Merchiston." The running and dodging powers of A. R. Don Wauchope are dwelt on with intense fervour. For many years his brilliant and consistent form dwarfed the performances of almost any other player. At Huddersfield, in 1883, he ran and re-ran the whole of the opposing side time after time, to the infinite delight of a huge crowd, who yelled in desperation, "Why, 'e's like a bloomin' eel; they can't 'old 'im nohow!" This is a natural and excusable exaggeration; just as afterwards we find Mr. Guillemard say of the famous "Pup" Dakyns:—"He was the best all-round football player who ever donned a jersey;" and Mr. G. Rowland Hill declare that Mr. L. Stokes "was the most scientific player that played in his own time, and possessed those qualities which would have enabled him, even at the present time, to be equal, if not superior, to any of our players;" and Mr. A. Budd

express the opinion "that the man who reduced the art of 'feeding' to a science, and thereby revolutionised half-back play, was A. Rotherham, the equal of whom he has never since seen."

The foundation and progress of the Rugby Football Union for the first decade have been ably described by Mr. Guillemard. The real causes of its foundation were an inaccurate and intemperate letter which appeared in the *Times*, in which the writer stigmatised the game as brutal and unmanly hacking, and the fact that the Association arranged an "England v. Scotland" match under a misleading title. The writer contradicts the statement in the Badminton "Football," that he was the principal draftsman of the new code, whereas the whole work was done by Maton, Rutter and Holmes. With the exception of the abolition of hacking, tripping-up, and some minor details, the Rugby School game was preserved in all its leading features; and except that punting-out has been abolished, the main principles which characterised the original Union Code remain practically unchanged to the present day. Mr. Rowland Hill brings up the history of the Union to the present time. He is down on professionalism in the game. In another chapter Mr. Budd strongly denounces money-making out of football, as he vigorously did in a work which we noticed in March last. Mr. Hill deplores with pain but from necessity the treatment of referees. The grumbling and growling at the referee's decision is a species of disease from which all classes of players are suffering; but there is a considerable danger of good players declining to act. Mr. Budd traces the past development in Rugby football with fine literary taste. The roughness of the Iron Age has yielded to the science of the Golden. The reduction of the number of players from twenty to fifteen has marked the dawn of modern scientific football. In breaking up the packs recourse has been had at different periods to three distinct methods of foiking, heeling-out, and screwing. These he fully describes. He rejoices to see the game becoming opener and faster; for thereby the often unwieldy scrummages will be shorter. He now advocates playing four three-quarter backs with masterly skill and mathematical logic; and looks forward to the future of the game with confidence, when all realise its great traditions and the absolute necessity of stamping out professionalism.

The next part of the volume is taken up with full accounts of the great International matches: Messrs. Guillemard and Budd pointing out the merits of the successive English teams; Mr. R. W. Irvine writing for the Scotch; Mr. J. J. MacCarthy for the Irish; and Mr. W. H. Gwynn for the Welsh. Mr. MacCarthy thus humorously describes the three parts of football in Ireland: "In Rugby, you kick the ball; in Association, you kick the man if you cannot kick the ball; and in Gaelic, you kick the ball if you cannot kick the man." The volume concludes with accounts of Rugby football at Oxford, Cambridge, and London; and County football all over the country. Appended is a description of the foreign tours. The letterpress is embellished with about forty full-page teams, thirty drawings of critical points in the game, and about two hundred strikingly-like portraits of players from instantaneous photographs. The editor has exerted himself most creditably and strenuously to make this volume a historical success; and to assure him of their hearty appreciation of his valuable services, all players of the stirring game who are worthy of the name ought to have it on their table.

#### CARLYLE AS A JOURNALIST.

RESCUED ESSAYS OF THOMAS CARLYLE. London: The Leadenhall Press.

WHAT language is spoken by spirits in worlds whose course is equable and pure we cannot be expected to know, but the tongue of Thomas Carlyle must have lost its cunning, and his vocabulary become sorely restricted if the sight of this peculiarly shameless

little volume, assuming it ever to come under his notice, should not extort from him some curiosities of literary expression.

The title of the book savours of larceny, and of larceny of the worst kind—from a corpse. "Rescued Essays," rescued, that is, from the oblivion to which their author deliberately consigned them. Carlyle preached the observance of many duties, and amongst their number was one, always a great favourite with us, being so easy, the duty of forgetfulness. How frequently and how urgently did he adjure us to forget a very considerable fraction of what historians and others insisted upon telling us. "By wise memory and wise oblivion, it all lies there," so he used to say over and over again in book and essay. He lived to a green old age, and he made a careful collection of his writings in thirty-four volumes and a noble index; then he died, and out comes, along with others of the same kind, this "rescued" volume, thus seeking to reverse the author's well-considered judgment—to force us to remember what Carlyle wished us to forget.

And what a volume it is! Fantastically attired as if issued from a fancy fair. A "Madge Wildfire" of a book, printed on blue paper. It is only fair to add that ridiculous as is its appearance, both print and paper are of excellent quality.

To crown the offences of this "evil-doer" it not only bears no date upon the title-page, but its editor, who has thought fit to tell us his name, "Percy Newberry," has not thought it worth his while to tell us from what particular dust-bin he rescued these essays or when they were written. Mr. Newberry may be an adept at "rescue work;" but he evidently is not acquainted with that eminently practical treatise "On the Whole Duty of an Editor," which may be extracted from Carlyle's authorised writings. He has presumably been so busy searching after the forgotten that he has had no time to study the real lessons taught by the master.

When we have said this we have no objection whatever to add that this little book, though it has come somewhat irregularly into the world, is well worth hasty perusal. Carlyle doing duty as a journalist is a comical spectacle. His attempts to crush his peculiar humour into a column and a half are as vigorous as they are unavailing. The product is a liquor too "heady" for human heads.

Of the seven "Rescued Essays" five relate to Ireland, and were apparently written in the 'Forties—an interesting date. Anybody who appreciated the Irish question in the 'Forties is entitled to respectful consideration. Carlyle did appreciate it, and saw deeper into it than the Peels and the Russells of that opaque period. A Scotsman himself, he was born free of John Bull's worse fault, an inability to perceive that nobody who is not by nature an Englishman wishes to become one. He knew how unfairly Ireland had been treated by English politicians, and he also knew how the Irish landlords and gentry had abused their position and abandoned their duties. All this was matter of knowledge; but there was also in Carlyle's case a matter of feeling. He hated the Irish Catholic peasantry from the crown of their queerly-shaped heads to the toes of their ragged boots. His hatred was ethnical and religious.

"The maddest John of Tuam uttering in his afflicted ghastly dialect (a dialect very ghastly, made up of extinct Romish cant, and inextinguishable Irish self-conceit and rage and ignorant unreason), etc. etc. Not a hypocrite, or, if so, one whose *hypocrisies* have grown into the very blood of them; who is a sacrosanct theological play-actor to the very back-bone; and prophesies, since he must prophesy, through the organs of a solemn mountebank and consecrated drug-vendor, patented by the Holy Father himself to vend Romish quack drugs, doing a little, too, in Repeal nostrums; and now reduced by just rage to *prophesy*: a situation enough of itself to drive one half-rabid."

This certainly is a dialect as mad, if not as ghastly, as John of Tuam's.

But allowances must be made for Carlyle's ferocity of style and temper, and the reader who can shove these on one side and look only for the



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substance of things will not find very much to quarrel with, and a good deal to lay hold of in Carlyle's utterances about Ireland.

When these essays were written the problem was how to make Ireland a happy home for eight millions of people. We have reduced that problem by just one half. We have now only four millions of people to provide for.

### FICTION.

HIS GRACE. By W. E. Norris. Two vols. London: Methuen & Co.

A KNIGHT OF THE WHITE FEATHER. By Tasma. Two vols. London: William Heinemann.

THE SECRET OF NARCISSE. By Edmund Gosse. One vol. London: William Heinemann.

It is not easy for a reviewer to say anything about a work by Mr. Norris which he has not previously said about some other work by Mr. Norris. Other novelists enlarge their borders; every country under the sun would seem to suggest a different novel to Mr. Marion Crawford; Mr. Walter Besant takes us at one bound from a consideration of the perfect English girl to a study of the mentally defective; many more instances might be quoted. But Mr. Norris, as a rule, to which we own that there have been slight exceptions, writes of one subject only—of the life of English people of a social position—and writes always with much the same merits. Perhaps it is as well, for he knows his subject; he even knows the way in which one man speaks to another; many novelists of a fine popularity have yet to learn that secret. He is rather worldly, quite moral, and very tasteful. All of these characteristics are to be found in "His Grace."

One recognises at once from the title that fiction has been enriched by another duke. There have been many dukes in fiction. We have had the duke who brandishes his title over his head during the day, and probably sings himself to sleep with it at night; he is generally said by those who describe him—we trust with injustice—to be of the old school. We have had the duke who makes his title of no account, tramples it under foot, and is very rarely unconscious of it. Mr. Norris has given us another duke. He behaves on the whole very much as we should imagine, a man might behave if he was a good fellow, and through no fault of his own had become a duke. Occasionally he remembers his dignity, although his childish rivalry with his more wealthy cousin seems to be inspired by much the same simple feeling that makes one boy race another. He certainly does not allow his conception of his dignity to entirely overshadow his life or make him unpleasantly gracious. He marries in a way which every one with a good heart and a paid subscription to a library will approve. There is of course the necessary delay; we must have the rift as well as the lute if the novelist's music is to extend to two volumes. If we like the Duke, we like still more the character who is supposed to tell the story—a man of hardly more than average abilities, with some spirit, right feelings, and absolutely no conceit. Mr. Norris's work does not exhilarate or perplex; it is not inspired. But it amuses; it contains just observations; it is well written; and in this particular instance, by the way, it is extremely badly printed.

A perusal of average Australian fiction might possibly lead a reader to believe—erroneously, we hope—that intellectual and social culture have not yet gone very far in the Colonies. The people of the stories have their merits, and yet the most meritorious of them do and say little things that we do not like. We mention this because we believe that it is a want of sympathy with the colonial point of view in certain minor matters that prevents such novels, occasionally, from attaining the popularity which they deserve. In "A Knight of the White Feather," the author, "Tasma," makes a very interesting study of a coward—a man, that is, possessed of a strong

imagination and possibly a weak heart. Cowardice is not a popular quality, although some very fine men have been cowards; but "Tasma" succeeds in winning our sympathies for her hero. This is done by making him, at the conclusion of the story, act courageously. Nor is this inconsistent; every coward is courageous when the motive is strong enough. The hero in this case, although he was disinclined to run the least risk for the sake of sport, nevertheless gives his life for the sake of his child. The other characters of the story are not drawn so well; and although the central idea of the book has in it something of freshness, much of its setting is of the common stock, and very wearisome. Yet there certainly is enough interest in the story itself and in the study of the coward to make the book readable.

One must not treat "The Secret of Narcisse" quite as one would treat an ordinary novel. It is a piece of careful work by a writer who chooses his words, and its style is the greatest delight that it has to offer us. Mr. Gosse can give a picture, an impression, admirably; he is as skilful in his selection of an effective, suggestive detail as in his choice of the words to describe it. Possibly the author has been too conscientious, and a little of the divine carelessness would have served his purpose better. At any rate, the story seems to have turned cold in the artist's hands: its characters eat, drink, make love, use improper language; but they are no nearer to humanity than was the automaton which constituted Narcisse's somewhat paltry secret. The book reminds one irresistibly of two of Mr. Walter Pater's "Imaginary Portraits."

### THE HISTORY OF PROPERTY.

PROPERTY: ITS ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT. By Ch. Letourneau, Secretary to the Anthropological Society of Paris, and Professor in the School of Anthropology. (Contemporary Science Series.) London: Walter Scott, Limited.

FROM reading M. Letourneau's work on marriage we know pretty well what to expect here. We find plenty of interesting and remarkable notices of savage customs, abundant illustration from animal life, and insistence on the animal side of humanity. We notice also, in regard to those periods of history where precise information is more abundant, several statements of an extremely questionable character. But then most anthropologists are weaker in the history of historic than in that of prehistoric periods. Thus (for what are a couple of centuries or so to one who deals with years by the myriad?) M. Letourneau rather inclines to treat the ancient Greeks, as someone has said was the way of the scholars of the Renaissance, as if they all lived at the same time: he speaks of Solon's laws and his aims with perfect confidence, accepts the legends of Lycurgus' reforms without question, says that the Athenians made the Peloponnesian War because of their Protectionism (does he mean the Corinthians?), speaks of their "stock-jobbing" (but we imagine this is a translator's rendering of the more comprehensive term *agiotage*), and has curious and conflicting statements as to the Roman *mancipatio*, one of which is the converse of the truth, while the rest seem to indicate that *mancipatio* began as a method of transfer of personal property, and was only extended to land when the notion of landed property arose. We need hardly say that this inverts the usual or lawyers' theory, and here we prefer the lawyers. At the same time we do not expect the sociologist, with his wide generalisations and masses of facts which are necessarily second- or third-hand, to be accurate in all his details. Nor can we judge a scientific book which is popular and has a moral by the same rigid tests as we should apply to a work of pure science. We think M. Letourneau has made it tolerably clear—to those who did not already know it—that property was at first collective; that individual property arose (to a great extent, at any rate) through warfare; and that with civilisation and the increase of wealth there usually has come a decline in the feeling of solidarity with society and responsibility to it which characterise the property-holder of earlier periods and simpler social aggregates. And he proposes to develop the solidarity again by an extensive resumption of property by the State through various means of very gradual working and by high succession duties. For those who do not adopt his conclusions the book may in any case be recommended as a handy collection of very numerous and often very suggestive details which have a use independently of the author's conclusions. To take one example: his statements as to the modified communism of a Maori pah or fortified village may suggest interesting analogies with early Sparta, and a simpler explanation of its communism than that taken over by M. Letourneau from tradition.

## FIRST IMPRESSIONS.\*

"Sit aloof—keep a diary," was Emerson's advice on one occasion, and "Charles Darwin" unconsciously followed it. Delicate health, constitutional shyness, and the imperative demands of the work on which his fame was built, combine to render his life, for a man of his distinction, one of scholarly but almost complete retirement. When Darwin left Cambridge, with the reputation of a crack shot, who was fond of good living, and had a passion for collecting moths and beetles, there were people who shook their heads ominously, and were inclined to hint that the young fellow was likely to prove the scapegrace of a hitherto eminently respectable family. There is no need here to recapitulate, even in bald outline, a twice-told tale, nor is there much in the outward story in the long and blameless life of the great naturalist to arrest attention beyond the epoch-making results of his scientific discoveries, and the controversies which raged for years around the figure of the scholarly recluse. The present generation has scarcely witnessed a more impressive exhibition of the purely intellectual life than that which is presented in the career of Charles Darwin, a man who quietly worked with both hands earnestly from the dawn to the sunset of his day of opportunity at his self-imposed task. It is just five years ago—almost, indeed, to the day—since the publication of the book of the season in the Jubilee Year; and its appearance now in this abridged and more popular form will bring the book within the reach of a much wider circle of readers. Dr. Francis Darwin is to be congratulated on the happy and judicious manner in which, for the purposes of this edition, he has cut down his original volumes. We are glad to find that very many of the purely scientific letters are omitted, or are represented at most by the citation of a few sentences; whilst every passage which throws light on the personal characteristics, the home life, the friendships and pursuits of his father are not merely retained, but thrown into bold relief. Those who are interested in the already half-forgotten controversies which the great naturalist's theories gave rise to in religious and scientific circles will find such episodes temperately referred to, whilst that far wider class which is chiefly eager to know the story of Darwin's own life, and to learn as far as possible from his own lips what were the influences and events which shaped his investigations to such momentous issues, will be charmed with the vivid and skilful portraiture which abounds in the volume. The great claims of Darwin are modestly, and some people may think insufficiently, stated; but even if the latter opinion is correct, it is not difficult to forgive such a failing, when the relationship between the writer and the subject of the book is borne in mind. Laborious, kindly, modest, and upright though Charles Darwin unquestionably was, the spiritual problems of life lay in a sphere with which he never intermeddled, and he remained in consequence as blind as one of his own favourite earthworms to the glorious vision which everywhere lies open to the eye of faith. The volume contains a fine photogravure portrait and an elaborate index, and it would be a difficult as well as an ungracious task to bring home sins of omission or commission to the author of these ably-written three hundred pages.

Encouraged by the favourable reception given to her previous book on natural history, Mrs. Brightwen has written a companion volume entitled "More about Wild Nature." Comparatively few people enjoy the opportunity of keeping and studying wild creatures at home; indeed, to those who live in cities and towns such an experience is almost impossible. Mrs. Brightwen, for a lover of natural history, is singularly fortunate in her surroundings. She lives in the country and her beautiful home is situated in the midst of meadows and woodlands. Fond from childhood of animals and birds, Mrs. Brightwen has patiently studied their ways, and has contrived to win the confidence of a good many members great and small of what she playfully terms the kingdom of fur and feathers. Capital anecdotes will be found in these pages concerning bats and woodmice, foxes, squirrels, starlings, kestrels, and other pets of the house or park. Mrs. Brightwen thinks that we do not sufficiently realise how the living creatures around us in their speechless way are alive to our sympathy, and she states not a few interesting facts concerning bird and beast, which certainly go at all events a long way in support of the flattering conclusions about the dumb creation at which she personally has

arrived. The volume contains a number of pretty illustrations, and parents and teachers who wish for object lessons on the value of kindness to animals could hardly find a more suitable book to put into the hands of boys and girls.

Year by year the "University College of North Wales" is becoming more and more a centre of influence and intellectual activity in the Principality. It is less than ten years since the institution was founded, and a glance at the Calendar for 1892-93—a volume of three hundred pages packed with statistics and college lists—is enough to reveal the growth of the movement. The number of students has more than doubled during the last seven years, and what may be termed the aggressive work of the college in the shape of extension lectures has steadily advanced in various parts of North Wales. In the physical department provision has been made for the practical and systematic teaching of electrical engineering, and the wants of another class of students has been met by the provision which has been made for those who wish to receive a complete training in the science of agriculture. We are glad to learn that the College at Bangor seems likely to benefit by the will of the late Dr. Evan Thomas to the extent of from £35,000 to £39,000, and out of this sum it is proposed to make permanent provision for additional lectures, the extension of the laboratories, the maintenance of the library, and the establishment of scholarships.

"Duologues" is the awkward title which Miss Ina L. Cassillis gives to a group of *tête-à-tête* conversations written apparently for drawing-room entertainments. Amongst the subjects of genial banter are psychical research, rational dress, and other familiar topics of the hour. "Hearts or Diamonds" is the name given to a sparkling passage of arms, and we need scarcely say that it is a new version of love or money. Perhaps one of the most amusing scenes in the book is the attempt of a lady journalist to entangle in his talk a man of the world whom she has been sent to interview.

We are not surprised that a new edition of Mr. Dawson's "Quest and Vision" has been called for, since the literary appreciations which it contains are not without vigour or insight. The book was first published six years ago, and has long been out of print; it now reappears in a revised and enlarged form, and the new material consists for the most part of literary and social judgments suggested by the writings of George Meredith, Olive Schreiner, Mark Rutherford, Rudyard Kipling, and J. M. Barrie. The marks of wide reading pervade the volume, and Mr. Dawson is in the main singularly adroit in his allusions. Occasionally the rhetoric of the book becomes rather oppressive, but in spite of not a little ambitious word-painting, Mr. Dawson has something fresh and suggestive to say. He may not see all round a subject—possibly he would not be quite so oracular if he did—but that which he does see he sees vividly, and he is able, moreover, to make others see as well. The "New Realism" is an essay in which Mr. Dawson gets into tolerably close quarters with the writers concerned; indeed, it is an acute and significant piece of criticism. The paper on Wordsworth and his message suffers from excess of ornament as well as the lack of more substantial qualities, but the book as a whole is always attractive in theme, often felicitous in expression, and sometimes subtle and penetrating in judgment.

Mr. Andrew Lang is an authority on books big and little, old and new, and therefore that his genial and cultured gossip on "The Library" forms itself an attractive volume goes without the saying. The collector of early and choice editions must pay, hints Mr. Lang, for his knowledge, like other mortals. Yet, it is far wiser to "buy seldom and at a high price, than to run round the stalls collecting twopenny treasures." There was a time, it seems, when Mr. Lang's zeal outran his discretion, and was not according to knowledge, and the consequence is, he bewails the presence on his shelves of a "wonderful heap of volumes, hopelessly imperfect." It is comparatively easy to pick up for an old song, "short" Elzevirs, "late" Aldines, and "incomplete" angling curiosities, and to teach the young collector how to do the other thing is the object of this charming and dainty book.

## NOTICE.

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\* CHARLES DARWIN: HIS LIFE TOLD IN AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL CHAPTER, AND IN A SELECTED SERIES OF HIS PUBLISHED LETTERS. Edited by his son, Francis Darwin. Portrait. London: John Murray. Crown 8vo. (7s. 6d.)

MORE ABOUT WILD NATURE. By Mrs. Brightwen, Author of "Wild Nature Won by Kindness." Illustrated. London: T. Fisher Unwin. Crown 8vo. (3s. 6d.)

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF NORTH WALES. Calendar for the year 1892-3. Manchester: J. E. Cornish. Crown 8vo.

DUOLOGUES. By Ina Leon Cassillis, Author of "A Noble Atonement," etc. London: Griffith, Farran & Co. 12mo. (1s.)

QUEST AND VISION: ESSAYS IN LIFE AND LITERATURE. By W. J. Dawson. London: Hodder and Stoughton. Crown 8vo.

THE LIBRARY. By Andrew Lang. With a chapter on Modern English Illustrated Books by Austin Dobson. London and New York: Macmillan & Co. Crown 8vo.



# THE SPEAKER

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1892.

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

AN official intimation has been given as to the course which the Government have decided to take with regard to Uganda. It is one which was foreshadowed in these pages some weeks ago. The evacuation of the country by the British East Africa Company will be duly proceeded with; that, at all events, is a step which cannot be delayed. If we are to be committed to a great and costly enterprise in Equatorial Africa, it must not be at the mercy of a company of private adventurers. But before any final decision as to the course which the Government will take has been arrived at, an independent Commissioner representing the Queen, and supported by an adequate native force, will go out to Uganda, not merely to superintend the evacuation, but to inquire on the spot into all the conditions of the problem. This is the wise and sensible solution of the difficulty which has been arrived at by Ministers. It is one all along recommended in these pages, and we believe that it will commend itself to the favour of the country.

LAST Tuesday the daily newspapers amused themselves by presenting to their readers circumstantial reports of the proceedings of the Cabinet Council held on the previous day. Apparently some Cabinet Minister at the bidding of a newspaper reporter had forsworn himself and given all those details, knowledge of which is commonly supposed to be absolutely confined to the Cabinet itself. We need hardly say that the whole story was a fabrication, which had not even the merit of being cleverly devised. The wonder is that respectable news agencies should send forth silly gossip of this kind, and that experienced editors in town and country should think it worth their while to print it. Yet there seems to be somewhere a regular manufactory of lying rumours. The other day, as we have pointed out, the Tory newspapers worked themselves into a state of frenzy over an imaginary intention on the part of the Cabinet to grant a general amnesty to the dynamiters, and even *Punch* was moved to make the tale the subject of its chief cartoon. The story was a sheer invention, so far as any action by the Cabinet was concerned, and, as a moment's thought should have sufficed to convince anybody, was not even *ben trovato*. Newspaper readers must be cautioned against believing the wild statements which are current in certain quarters just now respecting the intentions of Ministers. Above all they may discard at once any pretended revelations of the doings of the Cabinet.

THERE is no pleasing PRINCE BISMARCK. He is very angry indeed with THE SPEAKER and with our esteemed contributor MR. BIGELOW, for a statement concerning something he said to a Russian Minister on the subject of the Czar's treatment of the Poles. It is a lie, he bluntly declares. In most cases when a man denies any observation attributed to him people cheerfully accept his denial. It is PRINCE BISMARCK's own fault if, even in Germany, there is an indisposition to do this in his case. He has, however, been so successful in teaching his fellow-countrymen the value of a denial of this kind that he must not be surprised at their refusal to believe it. As for Englishmen, we cannot do better than call upon DR. W. H. RUSSELL to tell the world what

he thinks of the value of a denial by the ex-Chancellor. He can speak on the subject from personal experience.

MR. GOSCHEN made a speech of his usual bitterness on Thursday at a meeting of a so-called "Unionist Club" in London. Whilst loudly professing his satisfaction at being restored to the bracing air of opposition, he seemed singularly angry at the thought that his opponents no longer enjoyed that advantage. He sneered at MR. ASQUITH, misrepresented the action of ministers with regard to Uganda, and denounced the resolve of the Government to attack the grave abuse of non-resident voters. His strongest epithets were, however, reserved for MR. MORLEY and the Evicted Tenants Commission. In the opinion of MR. GOSCHEN the Irish Secretary has committed a grave offence in appointing a partisan Commission to inquire into such a subject as the state of the evicted tenants. The reply to this charge is a very simple one. MR. MORLEY was careful to choose among the members of the Commission at least one gentleman who was known to be an opponent of the policy of the Government; nor was it MR. MORLEY's fault that this gentleman, having accepted his appointment, subsequently retired precipitately from the Commission. Besides, does MR. GOSCHEN feel no twinge of shame when he talks about a partisan Commission? Has he forgotten the conference between MR. SMITH and MR. WALTER which preceded the appointment of the Parnell Commission, or the care which the Government of the day took to exclude from that Commission any single person who was not opposed in politics to one of the parties into whose actions it was appointed to inquire?

MR. FOWLER's Commission on the Poor Law is, we believe, nearly complete. It will be a strong body, though rather larger in numbers than such Commissions usually are. It was, however, necessary to secure the representation upon it of all the interests associated with the question of poor law relief to the aged, and as both political parties have also to be represented (MR. GOSCHEN not having had any part in the appointment of the Commission, at all events), the size of the body is necessarily considerable. We believe that no clergyman will be placed on the Commission. This does not mean that there are not many clergymen who could have given valuable assistance as Commissioners, but only that it would have been impossible to admit the ministers of any one Church without giving some representation to other Churches. But the best men, who would otherwise have served as Commissioners, will be asked to give evidence, and it is hoped that the inquiry will throw much light upon the difficult problem with which it has to deal.

MR. ASQUITH had a hearty reception at the City Liberal Club on Wednesday, when he attended the dinner in honour of MR. R. K. CAUSTON and MR. W. A. MCARTHUR, the two very popular English Liberals who have been appointed Lords of the Treasury in the present Government. In his speech the Home Secretary touched upon the absurd stories with which the Opposition newspapers are filled regarding the intentions and proceedings of Ministers. The "lying spirit," to which

LORD CROSS once made pointed reference, seems again to be abroad. Fortunately, nobody is any the worse for these falsehoods save the simpletons who believe them. MR. ASQUITH made it clear by his remarks that, though Ministers are fully alive to the need for a continuity of policy in foreign affairs, and do not propose to break down international relationships without the fullest reason for doing so, they are not less strongly sensible of the fact that they have been returned to power for the purpose of reversing the domestic policy of their predecessors. Already they have shown their determination to obey the popular wish on this matter, and every week gives the country a fresh opportunity for observing the difference between a Tory and a Liberal Administration. It is not merely in Ireland that a revolutionary change in the *spirit* of the Government has taken place since the present Ministers were installed in office. That change is just as clearly visible at the Home Office and the Local Government Board as it is at Dublin Castle.

THE immigration of destitute foreigners was considered on Wednesday afternoon at Westminster Town Hall by a meeting of delegates of the local authorities of London, and a resolution was passed in favour of subjecting the influx to "restriction and judicious regulation." Granting the premisses which the meeting apparently assumed, the amended conclusion follows logically enough. But we must remind the alarmists that the premisses so far are unproved. "Documents" were referred to, but they are not before the world. Moreover, as MR. LLEWELLYN SMITH and other experts have pointed out, an alien who never comes on the rates, who the moment he arrives sets to work to learn a trade (usually one which is the monopoly of his compatriots), and who at the end of a year or two is himself often an employer of labour, can hardly be called "destitute." As to restriction, moreover, the Local Government Board took steps in that direction two months ago, in connection with the cholera scare.

SOME curious lights have been thrown lately upon the question of the inequality of sentences. Three of the worst scoundrels in London were tried the other day for what was beyond all doubt a most brutal murder. The merciful jury spared their lives, however, and brought in a verdict of manslaughter. Thereupon the judge, emulating the merciful disposition of the jury, gave the two vilest ruffians twenty years' penal servitude each, and the third man fourteen years. Most persons will be of opinion that a life sentence in each case would not have been too severe. Again, in the Isle of Man a drunken and abandoned wretch named COOPER was charged with the murder of his wife. The case in favour of murder was a very strong one, and it was shown not only that the prisoner had been unfaithful to the unfortunate woman, but that he had frequently treated her with great brutality. Yet here again a merciful jury interposed between the culprit and the gallows, and that terrible person the Deemster being also on the side of clemency, let the creature off with a sentence of ten years' penal servitude. By-and-by we shall, no doubt, have to record a conviction at the Assizes of some poor distracted woman for child murder, and the passing of sentence of death upon a prisoner whose crime is as light to darkness when compared with the criminality of the four men who have escaped hanging this week.

THOSE who met the American delegates to the Brussels Conference when passing through London are aware that they had very little expectation that the Conference would lead to anything, and everybody in this country has been convinced for a long time that nothing will be decided there. In all probability the Conference will break up before Christmas,

and once more evidence will be afforded of the utter impracticability of bimetallism. In that case it is extremely likely that the United States Government will stop the purchases of silver, and that there will be considerable trouble for a little while afterwards. The most far-seeing are preparing for all this, and many hope that the preparations have been carried so far that the crisis will be less severe than seemed probable a little while ago. Yet there are some who are still sanguine enough to think that the Conference will take some measures to increase the use of silver, and the price accordingly was put up on Wednesday about  $\frac{1}{16}$ d. per ounce. It fell back, however,  $\frac{1}{16}$ d. the next day, to 39d. per ounce, and, according to all appearances, it will go lower. While the uncertainty about silver continues there can be no real activity in any department of business, and the Money Market must remain in anxious suspense. It looks now as if the silver difficulty would again lead to exports of gold from New York even before Christmas. Just at present cotton-picking is at its height, and the demand for money for moving the crop, as the Americans say, is large. There ought to be, therefore, activity in the New York money market and high rates. Nevertheless, some gold has been shipped from New York to Europe this week, and it looks as if a considerable amount more would follow. If the exports become large at so unusual a period of the year, the anxieties about silver will be increased, and probably Congress will be induced even before Christmas to suspend the purchases. Meantime, in London the Money Market is sensitive but undecided. Just now the rates of interest and discount are most influenced by the prospect of gold withdrawals from the Bank of England. But behind all their movements is the anxiety respecting silver, and the uneasiness caused by the German Army Bills and the Russian accumulation of gold.

DURING the past two years, while the Stock Markets everywhere else have been either in a state of crisis or a state of paralysis, the Paris Bourse has been confident, and prices have been wonderfully maintained. Even the failure of the Russian loan last year had only a temporary effect. But now the Paris Bourse has become quite sensitive, and it looks as if a period of trouble were approaching. The immediate cause is the fears excited by the Panama inquiry and the prosecution of M. DE LESSEPS and his colleagues. The disturbing influence of these apprehensions is all the greater because of the German Army Bills, and because also of the disquieting news from Russia, where another famine seems to be impending, and where, in spite of the official denials that the export of grain is to be prohibited, everybody seems to be expecting that measure. Further, a breakdown in Spain seems inevitable. It is estimated that French investors own not far short of 180 millions sterling worth of Spanish securities, including, of course, industrial securities, like railway bonds and shares; and it seems now as if the Spanish Government would have to declare itself bankrupt, like its neighbour of Portugal, and that the Bank of Spain would have to suspend cashing its notes. An attempt is to be made, it is true, to raise a great loan of 28 millions sterling, but nobody believes that it can be done, and without it it is impossible that either the Bank or the Government can pay their way. In every direction, then, there are difficulties of the gravest kind confronting the bankers and speculators of Paris, and it is little wonder that they should be depressed and should be selling upon a great scale. Here at home, bad trade, the cotton lock-out, and other labour disputes, and the difficulties of our farmers, all weigh upon markets, while, of course, every day the shadow of the silver crisis is deepening. In the United States the fear of a sweeping reduction of Customs tariffs, a change in the banking system, and a silver breakdown, are stopping all kinds of enterprise.



## ANOTHER STEP IN ADVANCE.

IT might be supposed, from the fashion in which the Tory journals have discussed the proceedings of the London County Council this week, and the iniquities of the Progressive members of that body, that no such thing as municipal socialism had been tried in England before Lord Rosebery and his colleagues first set the example. One can hardly believe, for instance, that the writer in the *Times* who on Wednesday morning lashed himself into a state of simulated fury over the proposed constitution of a Works Committee by the Council, has ever heard of the existence of the great municipal corporations of the Midlands and the North of England. If he had done so he would scarcely have cared to make so egregious an exhibition of his own ignorance. London, after all, is merely advancing slowly and tentatively in the steps of the other great cities which possess the right of self-government; and, to anyone who knows how the affairs of Liverpool, Birmingham, Manchester, and Leeds are managed, the fuss and pother of these cockney critics over the doings of the London County Council must seem infinitely ridiculous. We are by no means all-round advocates of what are clumsily known as Collectivist views, and more than once we have fallen under the ban of the young lions of the Fabian Society because of our failure to agree with them. But we confess that nothing amazes us more than the unreasoning panic which seems to take possession of certain classes in London whenever they see the great Council of the metropolis attempting to do that which has been done safely, and with no small benefit to the public, by smaller but by no means unimportant municipalities elsewhere.

If the proposal that has alarmed the critics of the County Council had been made in any of the great towns of the North, it might have been approved, or not; but it would at least have been discussed calmly and sensibly, and not a single human being would have raised the bogey of Socialism in the course of the discussion. Surely even the *Times* might know that a nation which builds its own ships and repairs them in its own dockyards has got beyond the point at which the proposal to grant a municipality power, if it should see fit, to carry out certain works of construction by its own staff instead of through the medium of a contractor, is likely to alarm it. As a matter of fact, the municipalities in many towns have long since gone beyond the point which has now been reached by the London County Council, and it will be a good thing for the people of London if that body should continue to advance upon its present line, and to undertake the functions which the great provincial corporations now discharge. In such a case the London markets would belong to the London people, and no duke or capitalist, or private body, would be allowed to have any share in controlling the food supply of the community. Our water supply would be freed from the greedy grasp of vested interests; gas and electricity would be manufactured and supplied by the Council, and the profits arising from this great branch of industry would go to the whole body of consumers. Public baths and public laundries would be universal, and in a thousand ways the inhabitants of the metropolis would be permitted to realise the benefits of self-government. It is only one step in the direction of the desired goal which the County Council took this week, but for taking it general commendation, not condemnation, should be bestowed upon it.

Of course, the powers which the County Council thus seek to acquire may be abused. What kind of power is it which is not capable of being abused? But where is any possible abuse of the kind hinted

at by the *Times* and the other enemies of reform more likely to be quickly rectified than where it is a public representative body which is guilty of transgressing? It seems to us that these foolish people who are trying to create a scare about Socialism, "pandering to the mob" and so forth, forget that, after all, the control of the County Council does not rest in the hands of any party, or any clique, but in that of the public at large. Water cannot rise above its own level; and if it should ever come to pass that the County Council goes too far for general public opinion, it will be speedily checked in its career. True, there may be times when the public mind may be in a state of panic, and steps which cannot be justified by the voice of wisdom may meet for the moment with popular approval. Such steps are, as a rule, in the direction not of action, but of reaction. But whether it move forwards or backwards under some unreasoning and temporary impulse of popular opinion, the Council will even then be subject to the law of the land, which will know how to protect the rights both of individuals and of the whole community if those rights should ever be treated with injustice by a governing body like the County Council. We commend this idea to the panic-mongers of to-day. For our part we rejoice to see the County Council moving steadily forwards, not towards an impossible millennium, but towards the goal which other municipalities have already reached, and which every wise social reformer must wish to see attained in London also.

## THE REFORM OF THE POOR LAW.

THERE are many signs that a revision of the Poor Law cannot be much longer put off. The Poor Law Amendment Act was in its time an excellent, probably a necessary, measure. In many parishes the agricultural labourer habitually lived on the rates; there was a real danger that this would become universal; and in averting this the Poor Law Commissioners did useful, though unpopular, work. We grudge no fair praise to what has been called "the masterpiece of Whig administrative wisdom" in denying that it is perfect, or that it is altogether suited to our present needs. Two of the fundamental axioms of Sir Edwin Chadwick, Mr. Nassau Senior, and other champions of the Act, were that outdoor relief would soon cease to be necessary, and that destitution was only to a small extent ascribable to causes over which the poor had no control. Both assumptions are far from true. There is no sign of outdoor relief being abandoned. Analysing the information contained in the annual report of the Local Government Board as to the recipients of outdoor relief, it will be found that many of them—sick, aged, impotent, etc.—must continue to get outdoor relief. As to London, Mr. Booth has demonstrated that no inconsiderable number of people are, from no fault of their own, unable to maintain themselves in old age. Mr. Booth's figures have been confirmed by inquirers in rural parts; for example, Mr. E. de M. Rudolf, who stated the other day at a conference at Lambeth Palace that, in reply to inquiries addressed to the chaplains of rural unions, he was informed that, in fifty-one unions, out of 11,745 indoor paupers over sixty years of age no fewer than 3,961 were deserving of a different fate. Mr. Fowler has, by reissuing Mr. Chamberlain's circular-note to the Guardians, drawn attention to the expediency of making use of their powers to give employment on special works undertaken to meet exceptional distress, and he has given sensible advice as to the mode in which they should set about such works. No one, however, knows better than he that

his circular will not in some unions be acted upon, that in others it will be misconstrued, and that the outcome will be setting here and there a few labourers to do work which they and all concerned know to be useless. Lange has well said that one of the most mischievous fallacies in regard to social questions is the assumption that there must be a solution of them, while, in fact, very often none is possible. The present difficulty as to the unemployed may in degree exist as long as unskilled labour is rife and trade is unsettled. What we refuse to admit is that nothing further can be done than letting Guardians in their wisdom, or their folly, set men to "spade husbandry on sewage-farms, laying out of open spaces, recreation grounds, new cemeteries or disused burial grounds, cleansing of streets not usually undertaken by local authorities." A little more system and foresight are possible. Distress comes unexpectedly and suddenly; but often the purposes to which unskilled labour out of employment might be turned might be foreseen, and relief works, instead of being hurriedly directed to almost useless objects, might be made of lasting benefit to the community. Suppose that each local authority had pigeon-holed a plan carefully thought out for some much needed local improvement—say, the excavation of a dock or the draining of a marsh; suppose that our local authorities did much as the Intelligence Departments of War Offices, which have ready plans for campaigns not begun, there would be much more show for relief works than there is.

The Government have decided to issue a Royal Commission to inquire into the best mode of uniting an old-age pension scheme with the present Poor Law, and we may be confident that the Commission will recommend in some form a pension system. About three-quarters of a million persons get outdoor relief in England and Wales; and what is this in the case of many of them but a payment of pensions in unsystematic fashion? In the field are half a dozen schemes, not one of which has gained general adhesion. But so far as the discussion has yet gone no fundamental objection has been disclosed. The defect of the present Poor Law is that its merits are negative. It saved us in all probability from the prevalence in many parishes of rates of 15s. to 20s. in the pound. But it has done nothing to diminish sensibly the permanent army of pauperism, always several hundred thousand strong. Reading some volumes of the reports of the Local Government Board, and in particular the practical remarks of the Poor Law Inspectors, we are struck with the monotony of the story—the same wearisome and hopeless reiteration of the fact that about seven hundred thousand paupers are always with us, and are likely to remain. Can nothing be done to disband this army? Can we get from a Royal Commission no light on this problem? In no very hopeful spirit we suggest that perhaps it is not insoluble. Outside the administration of the Poor Law much good work is being done: people on the verge of pauperism are saved from it by many private societies and by individual workers, who act not according to hard and fast rules, but by studying the peculiarities of each case—aiding this person with a loan, taking out of pawn the tools of another, giving a mangle or a hand-cart to one who has lived honestly and industriously, and paying off the back rent of someone who is in arrears by reason of bad health. Why should not this work be, as fortunately in some parishes it is, brought into closer relationship with the administration of the Poor Law? The reluctance to vest larger discretion in the hands of some of the present Guardians is intelligible. But if there were, especially in rural parts, a better class of Guardians—in particular, if they were leavened by the presence of a considerable

number of women of leisure, education, and kindness—they might be safely authorised to do things far outside the lines of Poor Law orders. Never before was there so much private charity, much of it, we take leave to say, well and wisely administered. Never was it so completely severed from the relief given under the Poor Law, and this divorce is not good.

In regard to a kindred matter something may have to be done very soon. The newspapers in agricultural parts are full of references to the "agricultural crisis," and at the coming Conference in London we shall be certain to hear much about the pressure of the rates on the unfortunate farmer and landlord. Writing of one district, a well-informed correspondent says, "The farmers are very depressed, and many of them don't know where to turn for wages and rent." Altogether the outlook is bad, and in some counties action cannot be long delayed. The Taxation Committee of the London County Council has reported that "it is imperative that the relief of the occupying ratepayers of London from the increase of charge should be secured in the next Session by the provision of some new service of revenue, such as, by way of illustration, a municipal death duty, rent duty, or special rate on ground values." Similar demands will be made by farmers, on whom, whatever may be said as to the exact incidence of existing rates, the weight of additional local taxation will be sure to fall. For nearly sixty years the present Poor Law has given us, if not peace, a respite from the consideration of questions which sorely troubled our forefathers. That respite is about to end.

#### AGENCY IN ELECTION LAW.

**T**ADPOLE and Taper—estimable but limited beings—look upon election petitions much as they look upon corrupt practices: each is a way of winning seats. From this point of view Manchester was a failure and Walsall a success, and nothing more need be said about either. But the reflective person who is known in America as a mugwump and in England as a philosophical politician will naturally have much more to think and say about the present series of petitions. Are we as a nation preserving our "moral continuity" with the old-world cathedral cities as well as with that pious slave-trader, Sir John Hawkins? The mugwump is a pessimist, who has no scope in his own country, and he tells us all about the sins of Tammany and Senator Quay. The philosophical politician is an evolutionist, who may become a Cabinet Minister, and he tells us all about the Ballot and the Corrupt Practices Act. But it may be doubted whether we are really so pure as we say we are, and whether our machinery for preventing and punishing corruption is as effective as it is complicated. The law which unseated Mr. James because he paid for hat cards, but said nothing about the free drinks which were so plentiful, may be ingenious, but is not perfect.

The weak point of the whole system is the theory of agency which still controls the election law. According to the old notion an election was a contest between two gentlemen who sought a position of some advantage, who were ready to pay for it, and for whom no sane man would be willing to work unless he was paid. The Committees of the House of Commons (endeavouring to correct the abuses consequent on this theory) had before 1868 so extended it as to make the required proof of agency very slight, and to make the degree of responsibility greater than anything known between principal and agent at Common Law. As they



seldom gave their reasons, they could do much as they liked. The Judges, when the duty of hearing petitions was transferred to them, had to do their best to extract a principle from many conflicting decisions, though, as Mr. Justice Blackburn said in the Bridgwater case, "it has never yet been distinctly and precisely defined what degree of evidence is required to establish such a relation between the sitting member and the person guilty of corruption as should constitute agency." Even Sir Henry James, strong-handed reformer as he was in 1883, did not try to touch the doctrine of election agency. It remains undefined. A mere canvasser is often not an agent, but a canvasser who is seen arm in arm with the candidate is. The one thing which can be said with certainty is that the election agent is nothing like the agent of commerce as he is known in the City or in the Law Courts. But the tendency of the Judges has perhaps been to assimilate these two dissimilar beings. The evidence of agency which is now required is greater than that which sometimes satisfied the committees. And the Corrupt Practices Act has incidentally increased the difficulty of obtaining evidence. The number of paid workers about whose agency there is no doubt has been greatly decreased, and as a rule duly appointed agents and sub-agents keep themselves and their candidate clear of those who may be expected to do dirty work on his behalf. The very severity of the possible penalties, by frightening the candidate away from dangerous people, gives the dangerous people a freer hand. It is true that those who break the law risk the penalties, but the criminal law has seldom been found an effectual safeguard against corruption. The one really useful check is the fear of voiding the election, and of that there is less fear than ever so far as outside persons are concerned. Of course an election can be voided by general corruption, without proof of agency, but evidence going to this extent can very seldom be obtained. The allegation of general corruption (which we presume was intended by the blundering phrase in the Manchester petition) is usually inserted in the hope that some of the cases proved under that head may afterwards be connected with the candidate on cross-examination of the candidate's witnesses. In effect it remains true that the petitioner must prove agency, and agency is increasingly difficult to prove.

The time has come to consider whether a corrupt practice proved to have affected the result of an election even by removing a single vote from one side to the other should not void the election without proof of agency. It is no longer the concern of only A and B, the candidates, whether A or B is elected. A large and constantly increasing part of the nation are active political workers, and they work not for A or B but for the principles or interests which A or B represents. The old cases speak of a bonâ-fide committee of volunteers, as if it were something peculiarly admirable for any man to work in an election without being somehow connected with the candidates. Nowadays intelligent men recognise that the success of one or other of the contending parties means much more to them than either A or B could give them, and no man recognises this fact more thoroughly than the publican. The interests of the nation require that individuals or associations working for the success of a candidate should be as strictly tied down as the candidate himself. The only real deterrent against such persons is the fear that they may fail to compass their end. Publicans will go on treating until they find that treating will void the election, and injure the anti-temperance candidate without any proof of agency. It may be suggested that a candidate who was unseated on

account of the acts of irresponsible persons would be hardly dealt with. But this, of course, would be his only loss. He would be subjected to no actual punishment. A seat in Parliament is not a personal prize. The nation is hardly dealt with if men can be returned to Parliament partly through the corruption even of their most irresponsible supporters. And as a matter of fact the candidate could check the irresponsible persons if it was to his interest to do so. He, too, often merely shuts his eyes and looks virtuous.

#### THE ENGLISH WAY.

THERE is one way of looking at a good deal that has been going on here for the past week or two, touching social and economic questions, from which sensible Englishmen of all parties may derive some satisfaction. True, the satisfaction in question would be self-satisfaction; but it may be pardonable sometimes to contemplate ourselves with a little complacency, and as the quality we propose to admire is on the amiable side of the line the consideration of it at least can do us no harm. What we speak of is the good-tempered, give-and-take, steady-going, common-sense, practical, and splendidly unlogical manner in which we thrash out burning questions which are the cause of dynamite elsewhere, and bungle our way into results which other nations will not attain till long after us, and then only by the blood-stained road of revolution. It is one of our oldest qualities, this way of working, which has stood us in good stead at many a crisis when the world at large seemed whirling onward to "red ruin and the breaking up of laws," and it is good to see that in the present great evolutionary epoch it does not seem likely to desert us. No discerning foreigner, with a mind unriden by logic and fads, could contemplate without envy, say, such spectacles as might be witnessed in England within the past week or two: Mr. Tom Mann giving his evidence before the Duke of Devonshire's Labour Commission, Sir John Gorst swapping nostrums with Mr. Mann, the London County Council cautiously and prosaically trying an experiment in municipal collectivism, the old City Corporation revolting from the law's expenses and delays and providing a rough and ready court of cheap justice in its Chamber of Arbitration, bishops meeting at Lambeth to improve upon the Poor Law, Social Democratic deputations clamouring for "municipal workshops" and getting sobered by the criticism even of Social Democrats, and withal a Liberal Government in power steadily extending popular liberties by its administration, and preparing by well-considered schemes of legislation to make the bounds of freedom broader yet. Such is the prospect. Examine it and you will find beneath its surface all the ideas, the sentiments, the appetites, the passions which form the yeast of what is known as the "Social Revolution," that revolution which is about to change the aspect of civilisation here as everywhere that human society exists. But how much is there in the prospect besides! what sane, all but imperceptible, leaven which leaveneth the mass and which will enable us to accomplish our transformation without Tom Mann having to send the Duke of Devonshire to the guillotine, or Sir John Gorst and Mr. Sidney Webb having to lead a mob of Fabians to death or glory on a barricade!

One has only to realise the nature of the ideas, or rather the aspirations, which so strongly prevail in order to see how far they might carry us if Englishmen did not commonly translate their ideas into action by a process somewhat more complex and reasonable than that of doctrinaire logic. Mr. Mann's

evidence was luckily remarkable rather for the reservations with which his practical temper compelled him to qualify his suggestions than for the suggestions themselves. In fact Mr. Mann, whether he knows it or not, is simply a sound Liberal. All his aspirations, every one of them, are the aspirations of Liberalism, and when it comes to action with him his common-sense will lead him straight into the Liberal line. Meanwhile his suggestions, the result of the honest strivings for a ready remedy of an inexperienced and imperfectly informed though sound intelligence, are of the crudest. The deputation of the Social Democratic Federation formulated them with a bolder logic the other day when they demanded "municipal workshops." That is what Mr. Mann's idea of dealing with the unemployed would in practice come to. Now it is worth while considering for a moment this expedient of municipal workshops. It is the first time it has ever been so definitely put to an English Government; but it is nevertheless an old idea, having its root in that very proper principle which all courageous thinkers hold in common: that every man willing to work has the right to get work, and that it is the duty of society, if it can, to provide him with it: the *droit au travail*, in short. In France in 1848 this drama of State workshops was fully played out. The proletariat, tired of watching the difficulties of giving effect in practice to the theoretical *droit au travail*, flatly demanded "national workshops," and as their demand was urged, not by a peaceful deputation, but by a mob whose spokesman punctuated his sentences by strokes on the floor of the Hôtel de Ville with the butt of his gun, the Government yielded, and M. Louis Blanc drew up the following decree, which his colleagues there and then signed and issued:—"The Provisional Government of the French Republic engages to guarantee the existence of the workman by labour; it engages to guarantee work to all its citizens." The only way the Provisional Government could think of carrying out this benevolent guarantee was by setting up the "national workshops;" which it did, and the result Social Democrats may find instructive. Not only did the genuine unemployed apply for work, but men went out on strike for higher wages and insisted on the Government giving them employment at the wages for which they struck. Added to these were the army of loafers and spongers to whose existence in every department of labour Mr. Mann has more than once made feeling reference. In a short time over 100,000 men were clamouring for the wages of the national workshops, and the distracted Government could only find work for 12,000 at one time, although, having run through all Mr. Mann's resources of street-repairing and sewer-cleaning, it set them at mere unproductive work in the Champ de Mars. Disappointment and anarchy of course followed, and the Government had to fall back upon the bayonets of the National Guard. The end of the chapter was four days' street fighting and a deluge of blood, out of which emerged a republic from which the country asked nothing but to maintain order. We are sure not Mr. Mann, nor even the Social Democrats, want to see us run through such a chapter as that, though if some of their ideas were carried on their logical course that is how they would travel.

The thing which has saved us in this country hitherto from the violent mistakes of other peoples, the thing which has enabled us to work out our evolution almost without shock, is our constitutional aversion to doctrinaireism, which is itself a result of the plain broad strength and the tolerant temper of the English mind. That quality we feel sure will stand to us in the future. But we must be on our

guard. The doctrinaire is always with us, and in the new order of things he is likely to demand more attention than we have heretofore been inclined to give him. Systems change, but the doctrinaires remain. There are as many pedants and faddists in the new Socialism as there were in the old individualism. The same type of man who in a previous era would preach *laissez-faire* with the rigidity of a German theologian, is to-day, with equal dogmatism and intolerance, laying down the law according to the gospel of Marx and Lassalle. It is against such as he the democracy of the future must put forth all its common-sense. He it is who would upset the train of progress if the carriage containing his particular nostrum were not run ahead of all the others; he it is who gives life to reaction. The Liberal party is the natural refuge for the democracy from both the doctrinaires and the reactionaries. It carries within it all their aspirations, and is the only instrument by which they can be wrought into realisation; it is the engine and train of progress itself. The democratic masses of England have always perceived this fact, and thus have we ever moved on from precedent to precedent, the public safety never jeopardised, and the national health but growing stronger with every expansion of popular freedom. In the great era on which we have begun to enter, when the emancipation and regeneration of the worker is the ideal before men's minds, it will be seen that the same sober but inspiring story will be repeated. The Liberal party in the van of progress will instal the toiler in his inheritance by wholesome English means, without going either to Germany or to France for its ideas or its methods.

#### THE BRUSSELS CONFERENCE.

THE International Monetary Conference which met at Brussels on Tuesday has wider scope than any of the monetary conferences called recently, yet it is in the highest degree unlikely that it will have any practical result. It has been brought together at the instance of the United States Government, in concert, it is said, with Mr. Goschen, and the object is stated to be to find a means, if possible, for extending the use of silver. The phrase is very vague, and may mean anything or nothing; and the Belgian Minister of Finance who welcomed the members of the Conference in the name of his Government seized upon that as an omen of great promise. The Conference of 1881, he said, had to consider the feasibility of bimetallism; the present Conference is not tied down to any particular plan. From this it would seem that even the Belgian Government has now given up bimetallism as practicable. But it hopes that something may be done to increase the use of silver; what that something is nobody knows, and everyone, as the Belgian Finance Minister frankly admitted, looks to the delegates from the United States for a suggestion. The United States Government and the Governments of the Latin union—that is to say, France, Italy, Belgium, Switzerland, and Greece—likewise the Governments of India, Spain, Portugal, and, perhaps, some others, would gladly welcome bimetallism. They all hold immense masses of silver which they would gladly see raised in value by any means that is possible. But then the question arises—What is possible? In attempting an answer it is to be recollected that neither the United Kingdom, Germany, Austria-Hungary, nor Russia are themselves directly interested. We are interested because of India, but, directly, our concern



in the matter is small. We have a good scientific monetary system; we have the strongest inducements of every kind to maintain it, and it is not to be thought of for a moment that we should change it. Germany took advantage of the French war indemnity to demonetise silver and buy gold, and it is extremely unlikely that she will undo now what she did at so much cost and with so much difficulty. Austria-Hungary has for years been considering the question of resumption. The other day, after mature deliberation, it decided to resume in gold. It has worked out all its plans, it has passed the necessary laws, and it is now only waiting for an opportunity to borrow the requisite amount of gold. It will hardly give up the decision arrived at after such mature consideration. Lastly, Russia has for years been shaping all its financial arrangements for the purpose of accumulating a vast amount of gold. It holds now nearly 100 millions sterling in the metal, and it has announced officially that whenever the time comes for resuming specie payments resumption will be in gold and not in silver. Is it in the least likely that the Russian Government will change its policy out of deference to anything either the United States or the Latin union can say in the Conference? But if neither the United Kingdom, nor Germany, nor Austria-Hungary, nor Russia will agree to make silver legal tender how is it possible that the Conference can have any practical result?

The Belgian Finance Minister on Tuesday expatiated at length upon the importance of the question which the Conference had met to discuss. It was natural that, speaking as a host to guests, he should use language of the kind, and it may be fairly admitted that the question is of considerable importance. But it has not the immense influence upon the prosperity of the world which M. Beernaert alleged. At the same time it, of course, is true that it would be well to arrange monetary questions, if they admit of being settled, by a conference. M. Beernaert went on to say that the characteristic of the present century is to settle by agreement more and more of the international questions that arise from time to time; and then went on to ask why there should not be an universal agreement about money. The answer is very simple; it is impossible. Concert amongst nations is very desirable. But that international concert may strengthen and may grow it is essential that nations should not attempt to do the impossible; and it is certain that they cannot give an artificial value to silver any more than to any other metal, such as copper or iron. The value of everything is determined by the demand and supply, limited in the last resort by the cost of production, and, whatever Governments may decide, those natural influences will override their decisions in the long run. Of course Governments may create a temporary demand, just as any great combination of speculators can create a temporary demand, either for Stock Exchange securities or for commodities; and the price may be run up and may be kept up for a time, longer or shorter according to the number of Governments that enter into the combination. But Governments are not almighty any more than speculators. If a people should insist upon dealing only in gold all the agreements in the world will not prevent them from doing so. And similarly, if the cost of raising gold in the quantities required by the world increases, while the cost of raising silver decreases, no amount of international agreements will prevent gold from rising in value and silver from falling. If an agreement of the kind suggested could be carried it would be immediately followed by a wild speculation in silver, vastly greater than the speculation that accompanied the American

Act of 1890. The speculation, of course, would break down after a while, and we should have losses and crises like those which followed the American speculation.

There is one other point to be considered. Assuming that an international agreement for, in some way or other, extending the use of silver could be come to and could be enforced, it is out of the question that it could be made permanent. It would have to be a temporary agreement—that is to say, it would have to be either renewable after a term of years, or, at all events, to be subject to revision. If so, what is to prevent any Government withdrawing from the agreement at the end of the term of years? We all know that the commercial treaties, from which so much was hoped and which really did so very much good, have been abandoned, because, for one reason or another, Governments thought that it was to their interest to raise Customs duties. Is it in the least likely that Governments would act differently if there was an international silver agreement? The price of silver would be run up unnaturally and would run down correspondingly. There would be disappointment, loss and suffering; there would be an agitation to put an end to an unnatural state of things, and by-and-by notice would be given by one or more of the Governments to withdraw from the Convention. In the meantime suppose that, in some way or other, the countries which now hold inconveniently large masses of silver could dispose of a large proportion of those masses to the countries which are in a better condition—what would be the position of the latter when the Convention came to an end? Suppose, for instance, that the United States and the Latin Union, which together have about 260 millions sterling, nominal, of legal tender silver, could sell half that amount to ourselves and to India under the Convention, they would greatly benefit and we should be in a worse case than now—supposing always the Convention came to an end. Is it desirable—would it not, in fact, be folly—to make it possible for the nations which have hampered themselves with depreciated silver to shift the burden to us or to our dependencies? International concert, friendly co-operation, kindly wishes, are all good things in themselves and are much to be fostered, but it would be rather too much to pay for them if we were to relieve, at our own cost and risk, those who have made mistakes in regard to silver.

#### CHRONICLE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

SCHELDOM indeed during the last forty years have the signs of political unsettlement all over Europe been so visible or so numerous as they are this week. In France the Anarchist explosion of ten days ago has been followed by another and more dangerous explosion of those forces of discontent and disorder which constituted the strength of Boulangism. The opening of the German Reichstag is probably the commencement of the most serious struggle in the history of the Empire between the monarchic and the democratic elements in the Constitution. Holland and Belgium are each in a different stage of a struggle for Parliamentary reform which hitherto has chiefly served to emphasise and widen the cleft between the artisan classes and the *bourgeoisie*. Sweden has made a long step in a similar and even more bitter agitation. In Italy the situation is not made clearer nor the Ministry more stable either by Signor Crispi's anxiously expected speech at Palermo on Sunday or by the speech from the Throne on Wednesday. Hungary is at the beginning of a bitter struggle between the Government and the Roman Catholic Church, which will only be intensified by the indecision of the Emperor-

King, and fresh trouble is imminent in the Austrian Reichsrath. From the Balkans there is no very definite news, but the political and financial tension is increasing every day. Spain, again, is on the verge of a Parliamentary conflict, and fresh Republican, anti-dynastic, and anti-English manifestations are impending in Portugal. Finally, the cholera continues to warn us of what may happen next summer by sporadic appearances in Holland, Belgium, and Budapest. Hamburg is free, and Friday was to be observed as a day of thanksgiving.

But the interest of European politics since our last issue has lain primarily in France. On Friday the Ministry escaped from its difficulties over the principle of the Press Law. M. Ricard, the Minister of Justice, defended it in a half-hearted, ineffective fashion: M. Loubet put the issue clearly to the Chamber, treated it as a question of confidence, and was rewarded by the adoption of the Bill in principle by 329 to 228. But on Friday the Chamber—at least so say the “friends of order”—eviscerated the Bill by adopting, by 289 to 256, the amendment of M. Jullien, the purport of which our correspondent M. Yves Guyot explains elsewhere. The powers given by the Bill, indeed, are to English ideas of an extremely dangerous kind; but a nation that stands the *Juge d'Instruction* will stand a great deal of oppression.

But the explosion came on Monday. The most specific and detailed charges of corruption have been made for some time, especially by the Boulangist *Cocarde* and the anti-Semitic *Libre Parole*, against conspicuous personages alleged to have been concerned in floating the Panama Canal Company—notably M. Hébrard of the *Temps*, M. Floquet, M. Barbe, once Minister of Agriculture (now dead), M. Ranc, and M. Henry Maret, as owners of newspapers, and Baron Reinach, the cousin and father-in-law of M. Joseph Reinach, of the *République Française*. Baron Reinach died suddenly on Sunday, and, of course, his death was attributed either to suicide or to apoplexy consequent (it was said) on the discovery that copies of letters compromising some of his friends had been stolen. Neither story appears to be true; while the specific charges against the other personages are in all probability fantastically false. However, during the debate in the Chamber on Monday, M. Delahaye, a Boulangist, repeated them all, and charged 150 members of the Chamber with corruption (without giving names), provoking a scene such as even the French Chamber has rarely witnessed. A committee of investigation numbering thirty-three was decided on by 311 votes to 243. Tuesday was spent in efforts to select this committee. In the result the Right, which claimed a third of the seats, only got three, whence a scene resulting in the resignation of nine members out of the twenty-six first elected. On Wednesday the rest were elected; but the Right formally withdrew, and there is a general aversion to the inquiry. A proposal by M. Pouquery de Boisserin to arm the committee with the powers over witnesses possessed by a Court—to make it a kind of Inquisition—seemed certain of rejection. M. Brisson will preside.

Meanwhile, M. Ferdinand de Lesseps, his son, and three other directors have been charged with obtaining money by false representations, and the formal proceedings commenced on Thursday. M. de Lesseps, who is very ill and feeble, is kept in ignorance of the charge.

Colonel Dodds has entered Abomey without resistance, and the King has fled. On Tuesday, after its stormy sitting, the Chamber unanimously resolved to congratulate the troops.

The Swedish Riksdag on Monday passed the new Military Bill, which considerably increases the length of the annual training. The Upper House adopted it without a division; the Lower (every member being present) by 142 to 82. The result is to intensify the agitation among the minority for universal suffrage. In Sweden the least qualification for the franchise is an annual taxed income of 800 kroner

(£45), and only six per cent. of the population have votes; it is possible that the Ministry may consent to reduce this to 200 kroner, but the Liberals will take nothing short of manhood suffrage. They propose therefore to get together a volunteer *Folketsdag*, or “Parliament of the People,” next spring, by the election by manhood suffrage of delegates in each parliamentary constituency to frame a Bill for the extension of the franchise. Two hundred thousand adhesions are practically certain, and the Liberals are very hopeful.

Three days before the opening of the session of the German Reichstag, the means by which the expenses of the new Military Bill are to be met were officially announced. Beer, spirits, and Stock Exchange transactions are to bear the burden—not, as was at first intended, tobacco. Together these will produce £2,900,000 additional annual revenue. The balance (£3,300,000 down and £3,200,000 annual expenditure) will presumably be made up by contributions from the several States. But the debate on the Prussian tax reforms does not look very hopeful. These reforms are strongly condemned by the Liberals as too favourable to the agricultural interest (*i.e.*, the large landlords), and there is a heavy deficit on this year's estimates.

The Emperor's speech at the opening of the Reichstag on Tuesday made reference to the prevalent commercial depression, but insisted that in view of the armaments of other nations the proposed increase was unavoidable. On Wednesday the Chancellor defended the scheme in a somewhat unsympathetic House. As the system (he argued) will take twenty years to come into full effect, neither the economic situation nor the pacific relations of Germany with other powers can be allowed to delay its adoption. France, both in her army and in her forts, is far stronger than in 1870; and the hostility of the Russian and German peoples contrasts with the friendliness of their Governments. He did his best to undo the unfavourable impression created by the recent utterances of the military organs, and disproved at some length Prince Bismarck's claim to have originated the war of 1870. But the prospects of the scheme are worse than ever. The alleged imminence of a military dictatorship in France is made much of as an argument for the scheme. But its fate is utterly uncertain, and the concluding proceedings of the Social Democratic Congress show that that party was never better disciplined, more sober, or more ready for a fight. It has emphatically condemned violence and rioting and even boycotting, and it is not seduced either by the so-called State Socialism of the German Government or by anti-Semitism. A debate on the relations of the military and civilians has further illustrated the unfavourable temper of the Reichstag.

In Austria Count Taaffe has offended the German Liberals—till now the bulk of his majority—by treating their support with contempt, and bidding for that of the Czechs. The Liberal party in consequence meditate a refusal to vote the Estimates.

Signor Crispi's great speech at Palermo on Sunday was a distinct bid for the support of a reorganised Left. It was largely historical; but he dwelt on the past services of that party, demanded Parliamentary reform and a return to *scrutin de liste*; single-member districts, which the last Parliament substituted, he condemned as “the negation of popular sovereignty,” and as rendering local and personal considerations supreme. He attacked the Law of Papal guarantees; advocated “an armed nation” instead of a standing army, banking reform, and fresh colonisation; reminded his audience that before his own entry into the Cabinet Signor Depretis had formed the Triple Alliance and broken with France; declared that Italy got all the inconveniences of the Triple Alliance and her partners all the benefits, and that the economic war with France had been as disastrous to Italy as a war “with cannon”; condemned Di Rudini for renewing the Triple Alliance without obtaining for his country some relief



from her burdens; and concluded with an eloquent appeal to the rising generation to rally to political work under the Democratic Monarchy, which he had before said need differ from a Republic only in having a hereditary head. The speech—which is very variously received—is in curious conflict with the speaker's acts when last in power and his writings since. King Humbert's speech on Wednesday indicated that the Ministry will impose no fresh taxes, but will reduce the administration and the universities, complete the railway system, and carry on some of the suspended public works in Rome. It was strikingly eloquent, and was enthusiastically received—but that means nothing. Signor Zanardelli has been elected President of the Chamber, so that the Ministry has muzzled one dangerous opponent.

The programme of the new Hungarian Ministry includes the cultivation of commercial intercourse with the States of Eastern Europe, the recognition of the Jewish faith, and free exercise of all religions; as well as legislation in the direction of civil marriage, of what nature is as yet not announced. The Roman Catholic clergy is up in arms against this item, and the Upper House is very hostile to obligatory civil marriage. The Emperor, too, will not accept it, and so, though the Independent party urges the new Cabinet to take a decided attitude, the question is as yet far from a solution; and Herr Wekerle's statement that he does not wish to initiate a conflict with the Upper House only increases the unsettlement. He was, however, serenaded on Thursday, and his spirited appeal to the *bourgeoisie* may perhaps stimulate their enthusiasm.

There has been a report of an impending Balmacedist plot in the Chilean army; but prompt measures have been taken and, it is said, the danger has passed away.

#### BISMARCK, M.P.

BISMARCK was asked in the beginning of this month whether he would not appear in the German Parliament and share in guiding the political destinies of his country. He answered energetically, "No! You do not understand the majority of the present Reichstag. This majority would avoid me as it would the pest. Most of them would fear lest companionship with me would rob them of an invitation to Court, might interfere with the advancement of their sons, and that sort of thing."

Few Germans have travelled so little as Bismarck, for we cannot count as travel journeys made in state or upon official errands. As compared with such men as Luther, or Stein, or Moltke, or Gneisenau, he may be said to have led the life of a bureaucrat, isolated from the wholesome atmosphere of public opinion. Until dismissal from office, he spoke with undisguised contempt of the public press and other organs of popular feeling, insisting upon a quasi-regal autocracy as the sole adviser and representative of his master, the King and Emperor.

What wretched curs must Germany send to represent her in the Imperial Reichstag if his words are true! What experience can he have had that could give colour to such a monstrous slander upon a body of legislators second to none in scholarship if not political capacity? Imagine for a moment a great statesman and patriot out of office coming back to the scene of his triumphs, and not even asked to dinner by any of his former admirers and supporters! What can possibly have induced Bismarck to publish to the world the shame of his country in this brutal manner? Certainly it is not Caprivi, who is essentially a soldier and a gentleman, courteous to his opponents—a man who, in his two years of office, has successfully avoided every appearance of carrying personal bitterness into political discussion.

Bismarck could certainly not mean that the Emperor would persecute him, for he knows that during the last two years he has enjoyed complete immunity from any form of let or hindrance while indulging in a series of unprovoked attacks upon anything which appeared to represent his Emperor's policy. The late Chancellor had governed Prussia since 1862, and Germany since 1871; and if, in these days, he feels constrained to complain that he has no political following in his own country, the fact is notable.

Perhaps the late Minister judges of others as he does of himself. He would have had Caprivi in gaol or in exile long ago had that statesman said but one tittle of the things that Bismarck has been saying since he left office—assuming, of course, that Bismarck were Chancellor and Caprivi in opposition. Bismarck cannot understand why his Emperor deliberately pursues a magnanimous policy towards him. He has a long memory, albeit now and then a treacherous one, and recalls, perhaps, how, shortly after the Franco-German war, he charged an innocent man—Count Arnim—with high treason, because he had reasons to fear that his then ambassador to France might prove an inconvenient rival in the graces of his sovereign. Bismarck ruined that man completely. No one can to-day read the minutes of that trial without rubbing his eyes and questioning the authenticity of the official report; and one has to travel back in history to the days of Cardinal Wolsey or Jeffreys before it can be matched as a sample of political butchery. Bismarck made that man's son a social pariah in Berlin. As soon as the shadow of the Chancellor fell upon his father, everyone had to prove his allegiance to Bismarck by declining company with young Arnim. That family was isolated in Berlin as though the plague had fallen upon each member, and everyone knew why.

The German official is not more ungrateful or time-serving than any other servant of Government, and if he is to-day so bad as Bismarck makes us believe, who is to blame? When Arnim was disgraced, every servant of Bismarck, from Cabinet Ministers to the last letter-carrier on the streets, was warned as specifically as need be that henceforth the duty of a German official was to serve not his country, but Bismarck alone. He has made cowards of too-obedient men, and if the Emperor dismissed him, it was surely reason enough that in all his years of office he never produced a single official above the rank of a common clerk. Moltke made generals, Bismarck made copyists. Moltke's last years were sweetened by the reflection that he had not an enemy in the world; Bismarck is daily furnishing us with the evidence that he has made few honest friends.

Bismarck had an honest friend once, his name George von Bunsen, who was a few days ago visiting at Lord Salisbury's, and whose name here as well as in Germany is synonymous with honesty and political sagacity. He enjoyed to a singular degree the intimacy and confidence of the late Emperor Frederick, and as member of the German Parliament was one of Bismarck's active lieutenants in directing the public opinion of his country towards unity. In those days Bismarck could not do too much to flatter or conciliate such a power as Bunsen represented, for it was only by the co-operation of men so universally respected that all the German States could be brought to a bargain which meant Prussian supremacy for all time.

But German unity, as a political question, soon passed out of sight, like the slavery question in America. Other issues, notably that of Protectionism, came to the front. Bunsen was opposed to Bismarck's measures on this subject, and naturally did his duty as a representative of the people by explaining the subject to his constituents. For this unpardonable offence the Chancellor brought an action against his late friend for *lèse-Bismarck*, or some such mediæval crime, which was never

known in Prussian law until Bismarck came to the throne.

The Prussian courts are fortunately independent of the Prime Minister's favour, and acquitted Von Bunsen. The case was appealed, and Bunsen was again released. Bismarck lost his case in the courts of law, but had in reserve a revenge far sweeter than fine or imprisonment. Word was quietly passed throughout the country—to the army, the navy, and officials of every grade—that Bunsen was to be regarded as an enemy of his country—that is to say, that Bismarck disliked him. From that moment, and as long as Bismarck remained in power, Von Bunsen lived in Berlin as a man without a country. His house, which formerly had been the meeting-place of everything brilliant or distinguished in the capital, suddenly became deserted, as though its owner had been guilty of a nameless crime. Many subsequently apologised to the owner for their behaviour, and explained that it would involve dismissal to them if they dared to incur the displeasure of their master, assuring the family that it was frightful to live under such monstrous tyranny. Bismarck's exquisite revenge would have been sharp enough had Bunsen been a bachelor, but in this case not only did he suffer, but his large family as well, all of whom were forced to grow up under the crushing sense of their undeserved isolation. The philosopher has many reasons for thinking such isolation conducive to a wholesome state of mind. This may be the case, but the victim should be caught young, like a naval cadet.

The blow that struck Bunsen was keener than any sentence which the law could pass upon a malefactor, and served admirably the purpose of the man who conceived it, for it at once taught every member of Parliament what he might expect if he dared to speak the truth irrespective of the Lord Chancellor. Such an episode in Berlin assisted in making cowards of those who did not covet the crown of social martyrdom, and encouraged hypocrisy and every form of social demoralisation.

Are we to suppose that those who cut Count Arnim in the streets, or shunned the house of Bunsen, loved Bismarck because they obeyed him? May we not reasonably conclude that every one of these people hated the *régime* of such a man quite as much as they despised themselves? I have talked with many men who have worked with Bismarck and served him in his days of triumph, but it is only from such as Bunsen that I do not hear abuse of the late Chancellor. Those who once were Bismarck's tools revenge themselves in this way for the menial position they have been forced to occupy, but men like Bunsen feel too deeply to howl in the common chorus.

So thoroughly had Bismarck corrupted the Press of his country during his long term of office that to-day papers of considerable circulation cannot conceive of a man expressing an opinion upon the Emperor or Bismarck without being *officially inspired*, if not paid. I have no doubt that a German paper will be found capable of thinking that THE SPEAKER has received a sum of money from Caprivi or the Emperor for publishing this article. Many well-meaning German papers have kindly insisted that such opinions as I ventured to express in a recent book were inspired, if not edited, by the German Emperor, as though that busy man cared a snap of his fingers what was written by me or anyone else. I have never taken any notice of such statements in German papers, but in the *Standard* of the 21st of November is a paragraph suggesting that I have some mysterious literary partnership with William II. He writes exceedingly well, to be sure, and no man of letters need be ashamed of joining names with such a master of vigorous and concise expression; but, as he believes in the divine right of kings, and as I number amongst my heroes Cromwell and George Washington, the result of our political works would be startling.

POULTNEY BIGELOW.

#### THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN FRANCE.

IN order to obtain some understanding of the political situation in France at the present moment, our attention must first be directed to a matter which in itself might seem insignificant, but which, by reason of the weakness of the Government in respect to it by the hopes to which it has given rise, and by the efforts towards union on the part of certain Republicans and the more or less revolutionary Socialists which it has brought about, may be looked upon, not indeed as the cause, but as an expressive symptom of the present state of anxiety: this is the Carmaux strike.

The Carmaux coal-mines take their name from the town in Tarn (with 9,000 inhabitants) near which they are. In May, 1889, in the municipal elections, the miners of the Carmaux Company elected fellow workmen in opposition to the candidates of their employers, and the new Council chose one of their own number, M. Calvignac, as Mayor. Thenceforth M. Calvignac looked upon himself as a power above the regulations of the workshops. He would only work on his own days, at his own hours, whenever his official duties allowed him leisure. He became ill, too, and some time elapsed before he could resume his duties. It would seem that he was on regular leave. The directors, however, not recognising this, dismissed him at the beginning of August. On the 19th the workmen invaded the offices of the company, followed M. Humblot from room to room, and under threat of death constrained him to give in his resignation. We have, unfortunately, had proof that such menaces are not vain words. In Aveyron, the neighbouring department, at Decazeville, in 1887, the miners killed their director, M. Watsin. The gendarmes saved M. Humblot, fortunately. They arrested a certain number of the attacking party. Nine were sentenced to imprisonment for periods varying from two to nine months by the police tribunal, whereas before the Courts of Assize they would have been condemned to penal servitude.

The strike was arranged by Socialist deputies who met at Carmaux, but the chief organiser of it was a certain de Vierzon—one of those condemned at the time of the Commune, a real type of the working-man politician, adorned with an immense beard which draws to him the attention and the admiration of the mob. Lest any workman should desire to work, patrols were kept up during the night to guard the shafts, M. Baudin at their head. The gendarmes, desiring to put a stop to this, M. Baudin threatened them with a revolver and insulted them. The gendarmes, feeling that they were not supported by the Prefect and the Government, withdrew. For the three following months this singular state of things might be seen: anarchy organised at Carmaux with the tolerance of the Government. Some Socialist deputies secured interviews with M. Loubet, President of the Council and Minister of the Interior, and M. Viette, Minister of Public Works, and then telegraphed to the workmen, and without their statements being contradicted, "The Ministers are with us. You will win the day."

A certain number of Republican deputies and many newspapers saw in the Carmaux strike merely a political vengeance on Baron Reille and the Marquis de Solages. They forgot that the first duty of a Government is to maintain order, to make the law respected, and to preserve the liberty of labour. The Minister of the Interior feared the disapproval of some hundred deputies—men such as Clémenceau, Boulangists and Socialists mixed; and if he did forbid them one day by a decree which was quite unnecessary, he permitted M. Calvignac, the Mayor, to refuse to enforce it, and M. Baudin to continue his patrols, flourishing the red flag to the cry of "Vive la Révolution sociale!"

On the assembling of the Chamber on October 19th, interpellations were addressed to the Government as to the way in which it proposed to intervene in the Carmaux strike. M. Loubet gave his assurance



that he wished to maintain order and the liberty of labour—just what it was felt that he had neglected doing for the last two months. Then, in flat contradiction to his own declarations, on M. Clémenceau saying that the workmen would accept him in the rôle, he consented to be arbitrator in this conflict between workmen and employer, forgetting that the duty of a Minister is not to arbitrate but to govern.

MM. Clémenceau, Camille Pelletan, and Millerand, deputies, were the representatives of the workmen. They demanded (1) the reinstatement of M. Calvignac; (2) the reinstatement of all the workmen in the mine who had lost their posts; and (3) the dismissal of M. Humblot. On October 29th M. Loubet gave his decision as arbitrator. He reinstated M. Calvignac, who, however, was immediately granted leave of absence; he did not reinstate the workmen condemned for the affair of August 15th; and he did not require the dismissal of M. Humblot. MM. Clémenceau, Camille Pelletan, and Millerand telegraphed to the miners that Loubet had deceived them, and loaded him with insults. On October 28 they moved a resolution in favour of an amnesty for the workmen who had been condemned. This was defeated, but was supported by 192 votes. M. Dumay then moved the recall of troops from Carmaux, and was supported by 80 votes—supporters of Clémenceau, Boulangists, and Socialists. And the Minister of Public Works was to be seen in the tribune promising to set free the prisoners! The news was immediately carried to Carmaux by Clémenceau and the others. Clémenceau, on leaving the train, shouted "Vive la République!" The strikers replied "Vive la Révolution sociale!" and accompanied him to the place of meeting singing the Carmagnole. There a committee was formed, with M. Baudin as President, MM. Clémenceau and Camille Pelletan as assessors, and M. Millerand as secretary—an arrangement which suggests accurately the position which Radicals who ally themselves with Socialists and criminals may hope to occupy in regard to them: they will always follow, never lead. They will be looked upon as useful accomplices, but will be chiefs never. M. Clémenceau called upon the miners to resume their work, taking upon himself to give them their release, and affecting the rôle of pacificator of the strike.

As a matter of fact, the workmen had fully made up their minds to resume work, being at the end of their resources. M. Millerand left Carmaux for Lyons, where he was to take part in a meeting of alliance between Radicals and Socialists. He was badly enough received. He and his friends hope, however, to have a sufficiently powerful influence in the elections of 1894, by allying themselves with the Socialists, to continue masters of the Ministry.

But on November 8th we suddenly learned that at 11.30 a dynamite bomb had been left at the offices of the Carmaux Company, and that, having been carried to the police-station in the Rue des Bons Enfants, it had exploded there, killing five men. The excitement was intense. We remembered all the incitements and the threats. The jokes of the Carmaux workmen about the imaginary dangers of M. Humblot were proved to be misplaced. M. Camille Pelletan's assertion in *La Justice* and M. Rochefort's in *L'Intransigeant* that it was Baron Reille who had had the bomb placed in the offices were looked upon as senseless. A connection could not but be traced between the incitements and threats of Carmaux and the horrible crime which seemed like a symbol of the Social Revolution and the fulfilment of the words of the Carmagnole—

"Tuons le marquis au son du fusil,  
Tuons le baron au son du canon."

An interpellation followed. The Chamber was unwilling to turn out a Ministry about a crime for which it could not be held directly responsible. An Order of the Day was passed expressing confidence in the "vigilance and resolution of the Government." Amongst the voters were Clémenceau, Pelletan, and

Millerand, who would certainly have opposed this motion had the "vigilance and resolution" of the Government been real. When the public mind is excited by an event of this kind, the Government is required to do something—good or bad, but at least something. Accordingly a Bill, which had been introduced in May, after the Ravachol business, for the modification of the Press Law of July 29, 1881, was put in the Orders of the Day. According to this law, direct incitement to robbery, arson, and murder are punished, if not followed by crime, by from three months' to two years' imprisonment and by from 100 to 3,000 francs fine. So also are incitements to soldiers, sailors, or gendarmes to abandon their official duties. But at present an individual who should put up placards, publish writings, or make speeches such as would render him guilty of these crimes, cannot be arrested till after his final condemnation. If he is acquainted with the technicalities of procedure, he can make the trial drag on for nine months or a year. Meanwhile, he may continue his incitements! The present Bill was to permit the preventive arrest of the accused.

The Government arranged a sort of solemn *rendez-vous* for the discussion of this Bill, which is, of course, of only secondary importance, and from November 16th to November 20th we have been the witnesses of a strange spectacle, all the orators giving expression to their doctrines and setting forth their programmes as though at public meetings: M. de Mun attempting the defence of Christian Socialism; M. Ernest Roche appealing on behalf of Boulangist Socialists against the present state of society, and proposing an eight-hours day as the sovereign panacea; M. Aynard defending the rôle of the *bourgeoisie* in the evolution of progress! M. Loubet, replying indignantly to M. Roche's strictures upon the Republic, reminded him of the great social reforms that had been introduced under it, and concluded his speech by declaring that the duty of the Government was to maintain order and the liberty of labour.

Why have you not done so? was the natural reply. You ask for a new law. Have you enforced the laws already at your disposal? Have you not governed for three months under the influence of those revolutionary Socialists with whom you now break off alliance in the tribune? You speak of the need of alliance amongst Republicans. But have you not subordinated the policy of the 326 Republicans in the Chamber to the anarchical fantasies of 100 Clémenceauite Socialists and Boulangists?

M. Loubet did not, could not, reply. But men who had at heart the cause of order could not refuse to consider the Bill which he wished passed. He made it a question of confidence, and confidence was expressed in him by the mistrustful and disclaimed by those to whom he had yielded. This was irony pure and simple.

The irony continued. After the Government had declared with so much emphasis that their Bill was indispensable, they accepted an amendment, proposed by M. Jullien, which completely nullifies it, providing that the accused cannot be arrested until he has been brought before the Court of Assize. The consequence of this is that in the departments, where the Court of Assize meets only every three months, the accused may continue his crimes till the eve of the trial, and then quietly cross over the frontier.

Practically the situation is not unlike that of 1888, in the period of Boulangism. The Radicals such as M. Clémenceau, who have always been clever at upsetting Ministries and at doing mischief in Parliament, were silenced as long as Boulanger lived. He died in September, 1891, and ever since October 31st Clémenceau has been crying, "The truce is at an end"—meaning the agreement amongst Republicans to forget the questions which divided for those which united them. It is true that he himself did not observe this agreement. The fall of the Freycinet Ministry was the consequence of this rupture. The Boulangists had been looked on as outside the pale

of the Republican majority. M. Loubet included them. He was full of deference also towards the Socialists, even ingratiating himself with criminals.

The situation is a grave one for those who have built up the Republic and wish it to be a Republic of democratic reform and progress. If they do not prove themselves capable of maintaining order and security, and if they do not show that they can govern, the country will return to the Monarchists of yesterday, to-day allied to the Republic; and if these latter come to power, the result will not be order, but reaction.

YVES GUYOT.

## DISRAELI AND THE JOURNALIST.

### THE STORY OF A SCRAP OF PAPER.

IT is a very small scrap which lies before me as I write—merely a single half-sheet of that thin blueish-grey note-paper which reporters and leader-writers of the old school were wont to use in writing for the press. The little sheet has been doubled, and has evidently been sent by hand from the writer to the person to whom it is addressed. The message it bears is written in faint pencil-marks, and runs as follows:—

"DR. SIR,—Allow me to congratulate you on your most magnificent speech. I saw your servant; and I do not think you need trouble yourself about me any more.—Yours truly,

"J. F. NEILSON."

There is an endorsement in ink on the note, in the bold handwriting which autograph-collectors know and love. It is in these words: "1844, Oct. 3rd, Nilson (*sic*), the reporter of the *Times*: written in the *Athenæum*." And then, by way of completing the contents of this pathetic little scrap of paper which, across the gulf of nearly half a century, has been wafted to my desk, there is the address it originally bore, written, like the note itself, in pencil—"B. Disraeli, Esq., M.P."

What are the history and meaning of this relic of a great man's days of storm and strife? Anything relating to Disraeli's early career is of interest to a world which has not yet forgotten his wonderful struggle with adverse fortune, and his astounding success. It so happens that of my own knowledge I can supply enough of the story of the scrap of paper of which I am, for the moment, the custodian, to link it with more than one interesting episode in the statesman's career. Five-and-twenty years ago I was in the habit of meeting Mr. Neilson, the well-known reporter of the *Times*, almost nightly in the gallery of the House of Commons. He was a white-haired, rosy-cheeked Scotsman, of pleasant aspect and address, whose tongue, even after a lifetime spent in London, betrayed his nationality. Though somewhat reserved in his bearing towards the majority of his colleagues in the gallery, he had enough about him of Scottish clannishness to cause him to associate on friendly terms with those whose names told of a Northern parentage. Thus it came about that in those far-off days, when Mr. Disraeli was enjoying his brief first Premiership, with a constant sense of the fact that he was confronted nightly by the most formidable opponent a politician ever had to face, I enjoyed many long talks with Mr. Neilson over his past career. The traditions of the gallery spoke of some mysterious link existing between the Prime Minister and the reporter; and my youthful curiosity, stimulated by the talk of the place, led me to make inquiries on the subject. Neilson was a typical journalist of the old school—one of those men who would have felt positively outraged if they had seen their own names in print, and who believed devoutly in anonymity as the real shield and buckler of the press. He was, besides, no braggart, and would never have boasted of the friendship of any man, however great. It was, therefore, with some difficulty that I learned the truth; but, bit by bit, in our many talks, he

unburdened himself, and I learned all that there was to know. The tale was simple enough, but it was interesting as showing something of the struggle through which Disraeli had to pass ere he was able to command the attention of the House of Commons and the country. It seemed that in his early days, as a member of the staff of the *Times*, Neilson had occasion to go to Wycombe to report an election-speech by Mr. Disraeli. The young adventurer, learning that he represented the then all-powerful newspaper, sought his acquaintance, and asked if he might be allowed to revise the report of his speech. Mr. Neilson naturally complied with the request—one frequently made to reporters. In this simple incident began the connection between the two men. Disraeli, having got into Parliament, found that, whilst the House would hardly listen to him, the press would scarcely vouchsafe to notice him. In these circumstances he sought out his quondam acquaintance at Wycombe, and asked his help. Neilson, who had been impressed by the young man's power, was quite willing to do what he could for him, and for a number of years he acted as a kind of guardian angel over his speeches, seeing that full justice was done to them in the gallery, getting from him the classical quotations, which were more commonly used by orators in those days than now, letting him see the manuscript report, so that he might correct any glaring errors, and generally doing his best to further his interests so far as was consistent with his duty to the *Times*. In all this he acted from pure good nature and without any thought of reward. Nobody in those days imagined that the time would ever come when the despised young Jew would have decorations and titles and pensions to bestow upon those who served him. He was fighting the battle of life single-handed; and Neilson, admiring the pluck and energy with which he fought, readily rendered him those little services which a man in his position could do for a public speaker. The end of this episode in their lives is told in the scrap of paper that lies before me, which Disraeli himself gave to one of his earliest and most intimate friends, with whom he had spoken years afterwards of the debt he owed to "Neilson of the *Times*." In 1844, the time which he himself had predicted came at last; the House of Commons was forced to listen to his brilliantly bitter invective, and the great statesman who had despised him was compelled to own that he had met with an equal under whose keen steel he was destined in the end to fall. No need, then, for special help or favour from the humble reporter. The modest Scotsman was himself the first to recognise this fact, and with simple manliness penned the lines which conveyed at once his congratulations and his farewell.

And was this the end? It might have been. Whilst there is no class of men who are more eager to avail themselves of the help which the press alone can give them, politicians as a rule, especially when they have attained the object of their ambition, are singularly indifferent to those from whom they have received that help. No man knew this better than Neilson did, and I doubt not that it was his own self-respect, foreseeing, as he thought, the inevitable end, which led him, in the case of Disraeli, to withdraw before he was dismissed. But, happily for human nature, this little note was not the end. For many years, indeed, it seemed that it was. When I first talked to Neilson, I asked him if he had ever received any token of regard from the great man he had helped. His face lighted up with the smile which his friends will still remember. "Yes," he said; "he asked me once to Hughenden, but, of course, I did not go." Up to that time, that was all; but a few months later, Disraeli, on the resignation of Lord Derby, became Prime Minister, and one of his first acts was to renew his acquaintance with the reporter. He wrote to him, and in the kindest terms acknowledged the debt he owed him, and said that it had been his pleasing duty to recommend him to the Queen for a Civil List pension



Mr. Neilson, who, during his long connection with the *Times*, was the most loyal and devoted of servants, placed the letter before his employers. They did not think it consistent with the independence and dignity of their journal that one of their employés should be the recipient of a pension; but I believe that they made up to Neilson the pecuniary loss entailed upon him by his refusal of the Prime Minister's gracious offer.

Yet a little later, Mr. Disraeli paid his first visit as Prime Minister to the Guildhall. He had a great reception, such as the City knows so well how to accord to those whom it honours above most men. As he stood on the dais beside his wife, surrounded by a brilliant group of princes, statesmen, warriors, and civic magnates, whilst the deafening cheers still rang in his ears, he looked before him, and saw at a little distance, among a crowd of humbler guests, his old acquaintance, "Neilson of the *Times*." Instantly he stepped from the dais, and, going up to Neilson, shook him warmly by the hand. "I want to introduce you to my wife," he said, and forthwith led the reporter into the innermost circle of celebrities. "My dear," he said, addressing Lady Beaconsfield, "this is Mr. Neilson, of whom I have so often spoken to you, and to whom I owe more than I do to any other man." Neilson, in that proud moment, standing on that historic spot by the hero of the hour, must have felt more than repaid for the services the memory of which is preserved by this little scrap of paper. So, at least, he told me, when, with a happy face, he related the incident a few weeks later. R.

#### THE PLAGUE OF POSTERS.

IT was once hinted by a prominent politician, during an interval of vote-catching, that the Democracy did not care a button for architecture, and that the beauty of London, apart from commercial utility, made no appeal to the mass of our citizens. To the spectator who views the world of pictorial advertisement with an æsthetic eye there may seem a leaven of truth in this indictment. In this respect no city is uglier than London, except New York. The moment the Rambler perceives that any premises on his daily route are about to undergo repairs, he knows that the inevitable hoarding will present the equally inevitable outbreak of glaring posters, as though the unfortunate structure were a prey to some horrible disease. There is no reason to suppose that the street which is thus afflicted is in any special need of the multitudinous soaps and balms which are suddenly urged upon it by gigantic letters and violent hues. It is highly probable that the children in that street enjoy their legitimate supply of farinaceous food, and that no maternal conscience is stricken with remorse by the portrait of the fat baby who is the triumphant flower of a much trumpeted diet. But the superfluous energy of commerce demands all the same that every nostrum which can employ a bill-sticker shall bask in the sunshine of publicity, wherever it is possible to secure the service of a board or a wall. Mr. Waterhouse, whose artistic soul is in arms against this disfigurement of London, is disinclined to make any compromise with competition. He holds up the example of an eminent firm of biscuit manufacturers who never advertise, and he proposes to organise a society for discouraging the use and purchase of commodities which proclaim their virtues literally on the house-top. This self-denying ordinance would probably prove too severe even for the most æsthetic, and Mr. Waterhouse himself would scarcely be prepared to say in reply to the interrogative glances of his friends, "I have given up washing, don't you know, because every soap is so obtrusively advertised." Mr. W. B. Richmond maintains that such articles as pills, mustard, and tooth-powder belong to the privacy of life and ought

not to be thrust upon the public gaze; but somehow the delicacy of the community is not shocked when the patent medicine man pushes his wares in the open street, and the picture of a gentleman applying a plaster to his chest excites no remark when it appears on a wall or on an illuminated transparency, though it would be deemed offensive if it were exhibited in a room. Nay, unless some public spirit can be aroused to make an effectual protest, we shall see the plaster and the corset decorating the clouds, and possibly the tail of a comet, by some development of a patent which is associated with the name of Mr. Sydney Hodges—an artist who ought to know better.

It must be sorrowfully admitted that the literature of advertisements is often amusing if not instructive. The present writer has frequently travelled in an omnibus solely to improve his mind with the philosophy of a certain soap. Of the actual merits of this article he knows nothing, but the journey from Charing Cross to Tooting has been made a liberal education by the proverbs and aphorisms and extracts from illustrious authors with which the literary advertiser has consecrated his instrument of cleanliness. The Board School manager ought to pass his pupils through the omnibuses as a sort of final standard, and the thought of the gutter child applying himself with special zest to soap because it reminded him of a Shakespearian quotation, must gladden the heart of every educational reformer. Then, who has not spent at the stations on the Underground Railway many a moment teeming with new and surprising ideas suggested by the advertising genius? The contents bills of the weekly journals—modesty forbids us to specify the most luminous—are a perfect granary of thought. It is quite unnecessary to spend your sixpence on some of our contemporaries; a study of their bills from week to week affords a sufficient index both of intellect and temper. You even forget the names of some stations: they are lost in the voluminous dictionary of everything that pertains to man except the place he happens to be in and the other place to which he is desirous of going. Lord Grimthorpe is so much impressed by this minor detail that he wants the name of a station to be inscribed on a diagonal board, which shall stand out from the sublime host of advertisements and save the stranger from the mistaken notion that he has arrived at the birthplace of some celebrated food for cattle, or the fountain of a world-renowned whiskey. There is some merit in this idea, seeing that the traveller learns so little from the dead language which is the mother tongue of most railway porters; but some of us would not exchange the riches of the advertising world for the most precise information that railway topography can afford. There is, moreover, an important class of entertainers whose interests have been entirely overlooked by Mr. Waterhouse. The theatrical manager is largely dependent on his posters for popular patronage. In many provincial towns the pictorial advertisement makes or mars the melodrama. Just as the rustic is drawn to the show by the portrait of the fat lady or the human ostrich, so many a playgoer chooses his evening's amusement from the tragic incidents, the murders and hairbreadth escapes, which are unfolded on the hoardings. To interdict these would be to inflict an intolerable hardship on a hard-working body of public servants, and to deprive many a waif and stray of all the colour and romance that life has to offer him. With Mr. Waterhouse's protest against the depravation of beautiful scenery by the hideous artifices of the advertiser, to whom neither the mountain-top nor the poetry of the glen is sacred, we have every sympathy, and the County Council which shall set the example of forbidding the banns between a waterfall and any sauce or pickles, however illustrious, will deserve the thanks of every lover of the picturesque.

Of the expedient proposed by some reformers, it is sufficient to say that a tax on advertisements is

no guarantee of artistic propriety. The money would be cheerfully paid, and then extracted from the pockets of the public. There is a tax on advertisements in Paris, but that does not prevent the enormity which may be witnessed in nearly every Parisian theatre, of a drop scene covered with *affiches*. The London County Council has done excellent service by making war on sky-signs, and by a regulation fixing the height of hoardings. Mr. W. B. Richmond's suggestion that bills should not exceed a certain size and should be fixed in frames like those used by Messrs. Willing, would bring order out of the chaos of advertisements; but it would be necessary to exempt the theatrical poster which is the Academy of the pavement, and the designs which a few artists of repute have contributed to the advertiser's gallery. In this direction, perhaps, the policy of æsthetic compulsion should be pursued, and a Pictorial Collectivism would do more for the universal joy than most of the articles in the Socialist propaganda.

### MODERN GERMAN NOVELISTS.—III.

GOTTFRIED KELLER.

IT probably would be a thankless task to try and induce foreigners to read our great—perhaps greatest—German novelist. Only a certain portion of every country's genius and talent is suitable for indiscriminate exportation, and it is by no means easy to spread abroad over the Continent a taste for, say, Robert Browning or George Meredith. Without wishing to force dangerous comparisons, one might well point out many resemblances between the gifts and failings of Gottfried Keller and Browning, or between the English and the German novelist. As is more or less the case with Meredith, critics praise Keller up to the sky, and ambitious, would-be "souls" struggle with his works, which a small community lovingly know by heart; whilst hundreds of highly educated men and women candidly confess their inability to wade through a single chapter, and the general public only just know him by name. With both writers recognition came late in life, but Keller, the older of the two, had three years ago the efficient, though undesired, advertisement of death, and the accounts of his funeral, together with elaborate obituary notices, helped to push his works into a tenth and an eleventh edition.

It is the old, but ever discouraging, discrepancy between merit and popular success; the old story of the great talent, who sees with his own eyes, feels with his own heart, and, therefore, talks a language which the general public do not understand, whereas all the emotions and sensations of a small talent are steeped in the tastes and ideas of the day, which everyone recognises and admires. Then, as the tastes and the ideas change, the masses awaken slowly to the understanding of those solitary men who have gone, but whose works have remained. It is true that the novel-writers' popular art has often proved an exception to that rule, but not in this case, and Keller has shared the distinguished fate of a Shelley, a Heinrich von Kleist, a Berlioz, and a Corot.

The language, which his contemporaries have been so slow in learning, is neither mystical nor involved—its strangeness lies in a rugged simplicity and an unconventional individuality. He gives his *coin de la nature, vu à travers un tempérament*. The nature he describes is his own Switzerland; the little walled-in towns, the solitary farms, and the cheerful social intercourse of a country parsonage; and his temperament is primitively healthy, full of quaint, mediæval humour, and with an undercurrent of deep, latter-day devotion to nature. The sadly Teutonic fault of diffuseness weighs upon many of his books, as also the equally prevalent lack of composition. His homely Swiss accents may often

jar upon readers accustomed to the perfect taste of more cosmopolitan writers, who, on the other side of the Atlantic, would be admiringly called "high-toned authors." Keller is subtle, but not highly polished; deep, but intensely simple; sarcastic and humorous, but never witty and never "chic."

A great part of his uneventful life is transcribed in the "*Grüne Heinrich*,"\* a lengthy, disjointed, but most remarkable biographical novel, psychologically educational like "*Wilhelm Meister*" and "*Richard Feveril*." The son of a widow, Gottfried Keller grew up without any parental restraint, and after an interrupted schooling, insisted on becoming a painter. He had much to suffer under inefficient and uncongenial masters, but still more from his own doubting, reserved, and unguided character. A girl he was attached to died young, and he had no real and intimate friends. He continued his landscape painting in Munich, and studied science and philosophy in Berlin, passing through many a religious and moral crisis, until finally he found peace in the monotonous occupation of a clerk to the municipality of Zürich. In this simple fulfilment of citizen duties fifteen years passed away, and the remainder of his life was spent in Zürich; a lonely bachelor existence, glorified only by the outspoken and unanimous admiration of Germany's most noted authors and critics.

From his native land he drew that forcible realism which we usually associate with everything Swiss. We find in him frank humour, vivid local colouring, brilliantly picturesque historical allusions, and a sound burgher-foundation of respectable common-sense. We recognise the keen political interests of one sprung from an old republic in his hatred of the Jesuit as of an oligarchy, and in his indignant satire against philistine self-satisfied indolence, which burns through the humorous, magnificently original "*Seldwyla Folk*." But we can also plainly trace the influence of his German studies, Germany representing to him by no means the land of Bismarck, but the home of Goethe, of Jean Paul, and of the Swabian Romantic School. These two rather divergent strains, these conflicting Swiss and German elements, invest him with such marked personality of his own.

"*Romeo und Julia in the Village*," one of the "*Seldwyla*" series, first met with something like success, and is a strong, yet touching, passionate, yet simple, love tragedy of everyday country life. Then followed the "*Zürcher Novellen*," with their rich historical colouring and vigorous—occasionally wildly grotesque—sense of humour. "*The Seven Legends*" are most delightful versions—some would call them travesties—of mediæval legends, retaining the picturesque surroundings and stories, but investing them, in an inimitably original way, with modern ethics and modern ideas. They are short and concise stories, and written in a most admirable German: classic in its simplicity yet warmed with occasional lovable reminiscences of homely dialect. The "*Sinnegedicht*" has made many friends, and can boast of many beautiful passages; but it requires a German turn of mind to forgive the frequent interruptions and interludes of the narrative. And "*Martin Salander*," an interesting, rather severely naïve, novel, with a decided political basis, finally closes the list of his works. This list seems short compared with the full span of his years, but long, when the multitudes of his full-blooded, living men and women crowd around your mind's-eye.

The delineation of children and women is a fair test of literary power. This test Keller can well stand. Perhaps few authors have surpassed his analysis of a schoolboy's thoughts, temptations, and weaknesses, and few have so efficiently taught pedagogy without ever preaching a cut-and-dried science. "*The secret of education*," he once remarks, "is not only to possess that ineffaceable vital youthfulness which alone is capable of feeling with a child,

\* *Der Grüne Heinrich*. Die Leute von Seldwyla (Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorf), Zürcher Novellen, Das Sinnegedicht, Sieben Legenden, Martin Salander. Published by Wilhelm Herz, Berlin.



but also an assured superiority in all eventualities of life." And again, he calls "the wrestling with a stern and cautious father, who can look beyond the threshold of home, a steel bath for youthful expansion, different from undefended mother's love." His conception of women is peculiar, and, notwithstanding the totally different surroundings and social position, his heroines and those of George Meredith often show the same ripe individuality, the same warm-blooded life, the same natural, winning charm, which only appears strange to us through being so widely removed from the conventional graces described in the conventional novel. As with Meredith, the hero is usually in love with several young persons at the same time, all of whom are equally attached to him, and all of whom conflictually influence and mould his character and destiny. The "Grüne Heinrich" explains to the sensual, but good-hearted, straightforward Judith the difference between his feelings towards her and towards the simple, delicately pure village schoolmaster's child. "Now I should like to suffer anything and everything for Anna, and to obey her slightest wish; for her sake I should like to become an honest good fellow, in whom all is clear and clean, so that she might look through me as through a crystal. I should wish to live in all eternity with her soul, even if from to-day I should never see her again. All this I could not do for you. And yet I love you with my whole heart, and if you desired as a proof that I should allow you to thrust a knife into me, I should, this instant, unhesitatingly stand still, and quietly let my blood flow down on your knees." Keller's artistic studies give a strength and substance to his remarks on æsthetic subjects. He scathes the ranting set who "praisingly vaunt as a tragically-situated idealist the architect whose church-tower falls to pieces, and sneer at those whose towers remain standing as sordidly-minded pot-boilers." "This sort of idealism is indolence proceeding from want of conscious and well-balanced experience. It tries to replace the industry of real life through miracles, tries to make bread out of stones instead of ploughing and sowing, instead of awaiting the growth of the ears, instead of reaping and threshing and grinding and baking." And again, "Only a few have never known the fatal term 'genius' before having simply and artlessly accomplished a satisfactory and solid amount of life, learning, work and achievement. It is even doubtful whether the most modest success does not require a firm foundation of preconceived intentions and all apparatus of struggling genius; and the only difference may be that whereas the real genius hides and burns this apparatus, the sham genius elaborately parades it—a mouldering scaffold around an uncompleted temple." His poetic creed is well expressed in what he remarks on "the self-forgetting love of existence, of all that has been formed and has remained, a love which honours the significance of every object and feels the unity and depth of the world." Or shall we end with these words, which sound strange, yet sympathetic, on the lips of a contemporary of Schopenhauer and of Nietzsche: "It is higher and subtler to respect than to despise."

English taste is curiously divided between Latin and Teutonic tendencies. There are those whose ideal is polish and wit and perfection, and those who will forgive uncouth forms for the sake of depth, humorous quaintness and creative power. Needless to say it is amongst these latter that Gottfried Keller's English admirers will be found.

Berlin.

MARIE VON BUNSEN.

#### THE NEW ENGLISH ART CLUB.

THIS, the ninth season of the New English Art Club, has been marked by a decisive step. The club has rejected two portraits by Mr. Shannon. So that the public may understand and appreciate the importance of this step, I will sketch, *à coups de crayon*

*peu fondus*, the portrait of a lady as I imagine Mr. Shannon might have painted her. A woman of thirty, an oval face, and a long white brow; pale brown hair, tastefully arranged with flowers and a small plume. The eyes large and tender, expressive of a soul that yearns and has been misunderstood. The nose straight, the nostrils well-defined, slightly dilated; the mouth curled, and very red. The shoulders large, white, and over-modelled, with cream tints; the arms soft and rounded; diamond bracelets on the wrists; diamonds on the emotional neck. Her dress is of the finest duchesse satin, and it falls in heavy folds. She holds a bouquet in her hands; a pale green garden is behind her; swans are moving gracefully through shadowy water, whereon the moon shines peacefully. Add to this conception the marvellous square brushwork of the French studio, and you have the man born to paint English duchesses—to paint them as they see themselves, as they would be seen by posterity; and through Mr. Shannon our duchesses realise all their aspirations, present and posthumous. The popularity of these pictures is undoubted; wherever they hang, and they hang everywhere, except in the New English Art Club, couples linger. "How charming, how beautifully dressed, how refined she looks!" and the wife who has not married a man *à l'hauteur de ses sentiments* casts on him a withering glance, which says, "Why can't you afford to let me be painted by Mr. Shannon?"

We are here to realise our ideals, and far is it from my desire to thwart any lady in her aspirations, be they in white or violet satin, with or without green gardens. If I were on the hanging committee of the Royal Academy, all the duchesses in the kingdom should be realised, and then—I would create more duchesses, and they, too, should be realised by Messrs. Shannon, Hacker, and Solomon. And when these painters arrived, each with a van filled with new satin duchesses, I would say, "Go to Mr. Agnew, ask him what space he requires, and anything over and above they shall have it." I would convert the Chantrey Fund into white satin duchesses, and build a museum opposite Mr. Tate's for the blue. I would do anything for these painters and their duchesses except hang them in the New English Art Club.

For it is entirely necessary that the public should never be left for a moment in doubt as to the intention of this club. It is open to those who paint for the joy of painting; and it is entirely disassociated from all commercialism. Muslin ballet-girl or satin duchess it matters no jot, nothing counts with the jury but *l'idée plastique*—comradeship—money gain or loss are waived. The rejection of Mr. Shannon's portraits will probably cost the club four guineas a year, the amount of his subscription, and it will certainly lose to the club the visits of his numerous drawing-room following. This is to be regretted—in a way. The club must pay its expenses, but it were better that it should cease than an infringement of principle should be incurred. Either we may or we may not have a gallery from which popular painting is excluded. I think that we should; but I know that Academicians and dealers are in favour of enforced prostitution in art. That men should practice painting for the mere love of paint is wholly repugnant to every healthy-minded Philistine. The critic of the *Daily Telegraph* described the pictures in the present exhibition as things that no one would wish to possess; he then pointed out that a great many were excellently well painted. Quite so. I have always maintained that there is nothing that the average Englishman—the reader of the *Daily Telegraph*—dislikes so much as good painting. He regards it in the light of an offence, and what makes it peculiarly irritating in his eyes is the difficulty of declaring it to be an immoral action; he instinctively feels that it is immoral, but somehow the crime seems to elude definition. The Independent Theatre was another humble

endeavour which sorely tried the conscience of the average Englishman. That anyone should wish to write plays that were not intended to please the public—that did not pay—was an unheard-of desire, morbid and unwholesome as could well be, and meriting severest rebuke. But the Independent Theatre has somehow managed to struggle into a second year of life, and the New English Art Club has opened its ninth exhibition; so I suppose that the *Daily Telegraph* will have to make up its mind, sorrowfully, of course, and with regret, that there are folk still in London who are not always ready to sell their talents to the highest bidder.

Praise of the New English Art Club is understood to mean that the walls are covered with masterpieces, and that with every exhibition painting has been discovered afresh. But my praise is the simplest statement of the truth. The present exhibition is the most interesting we have had in London this year. There now hangs in the New English Art Club a better portrait and a better landscape than any that hung on the walls of this year's Academy. The Editor of THE SPEAKER seems not disinclined to print letters controverting the articles I send him. Correspondents are numerous. Perhaps one will undertake to name a portrait in this year's Academy better than the portrait (47), Mr. Sargent's "Portrait Study." Perhaps the same, or another, correspondent will undertake to name a better landscape than (87) "Evening in Spring," by Mr. Bernard Sickert; or (100) "Henley Regatta," by the same painter.

By the side of a fine Hals, Mr. Sargent's portrait study might look small, thin, and over-explained, but nothing short of a fine Hals would affect its real beauty. A more engaging and enticing work in modern art I hardly know. I returned to it again and again, and every time to discover new beauties. Truly a charming picture, perfect from end to end. My admiration for Mr. Sargent has often hesitated, but this picture completely wins me. It has all the qualities of Mr. Sargent's best work; and it has something more: it is painted with that measure of calculation and reserve which is present in all work of the first order of merit. I find the picture described with sufficient succinctness in my notes: "A half-length portrait of a woman, in a dress of shot-silk—a sort of red violet, the colour known as puce. The face is pale, the chin is prominent and pointed. There were some Japanese characteristics in the model, and these have been selected. The eyes are long, and their look is aslant; the eyebrows are high and marked; the dark hair grows round the pale forehead with wig-like abruptness, and the painter has attempted no attenuation. The carnations are wanting in depth of colour—they are somewhat chalky; but what I admire so much is the exquisite selection, besides the points mentioned—the shadowed outline, so full of the form of her face, and the markings about the eyes, so like her; and the rendering is full of the beauty of incomparable skill. The neck, how well placed beneath the pointed chin! How exact in width, in length, and how it corresponds with the ear; and the jawbone is under the skin; and the anatomies are all explicit—the collar-bone, the hollow of the armpit, and the muscle of the arm, the placing of the bosom, its shape, its size, its weight. Mr. Sargent's drawing speaks without hesitation, a beautiful, decisive eloquence, the meaning never in excess of the expression, nor is the expression ever redundant."

I said that we find in this portrait reserve not frequently to be met with in Mr. Sargent's work. What I first noticed in the picture was the admirable treatment of the hands. They are upon her hips, the palms turned out, and so reduced is the tone that they are hardly distinguishable from the dress. As the model sat the light must have often fallen on her hands, and five years ago Mr. Sargent might have painted them in the light. But the portrait tells us that he has learnt the last and most difficult lesson

—how to omit. Any touch of light on those hands would rupture the totality and jeopardise the colour-harmony, rare without suspicion of exaggeration or affectation. In the background a beautiful chocolate balances and enforces the various shades of the shot-silk, and with severity that is fortunate. By aid of two red poppies, worn in the bodice, a final note in the chord is reached—a resonant and closing consonance.

Mr. Sargent's portraits are often improvisations; this is an exception; the face, if I am not mistaken, was retouched. It seems more closely knit than usual; a beautiful work, certainly: I should call it a perfect work were it not for one thing: the drawing is a little obvious: in places we can detect it; it does not *coule de source* like the drawing of the very great masters.

I have come to the end of my space, and must postpone the rest of my remarks on an interesting and remarkable exhibition till next week.

G. M.

## THE WEEK.

"A. B. W." WRITES:—"MRS. JOHN WOOD has returned to the London stage in a wheel-chair, a vehicle as unsuited to her energetic person as the play which MR. HADDON CHAMBERS has 'written round' the chair, under the title of *The Old Lady*, is inadequate to the merits of the Criterion Company. To her chair the old lady is glued for three acts, save for one brief moment, when she rises from it to administer a sound thwacking to a rascally Scot who, after inducing her to lose her money at Monte Carlo on his infallible 'seestem,' has withdrawn from his engagement to marry her, on the plea of her penniless condition. Her fortune is, however, recovered at the tables by her chair-attendant, a sanctimonious person with a conscientious aversion to gambling, and with it she makes the course of true love run smooth for the *jeune premier* and the *ingénue*. The adventures and misadventures of these young persons in the company of a couple of Monte Carlo sharpers, male and female, make up the rest of the story. With the exception of the old lady—who is obviously related to the typical 'rich aunt' of Thackerayan tradition—there is no real character in the play. MR. CHAMBERS'S sense of fun (even in the Molièresque business of the thwacking) is crude, and the too frequent 'damns' of his dialogue went near to irritating the pit on the first night into 'damning' the piece. *Similia similibus*, I suppose. A more serious cause of irritation, as being far less easily removable, is the absence of dramatic progress, the action being entirely suspended throughout an act, showing (or, rather, grossly caricaturing) the scene at the *rouge-et-noir* table at Monte Carlo. MRS. JOHN WOOD is assisted by MISS ROSINA FILIPPI, MR. FRED KERR, MR. W. H. VERNON, MR. STANDING, and other players of talents far superior to the present opportunity for their exercise."

PANAMA, a recent visitor writes, is a town half of old Spanish ruins, and half of modern cosmopolitan shanties. It is a miserable hole, with neither a public promenade nor a theatre. Travellers curse the luck which compels them to spend three or four days there. The only distraction is the roulette-table of a gaming-house, where the players easily break the bank, whose capital is very slender. Cock-fights are also resorted to. On Christmas Day fourteen cocks with steel spurs are let loose in the arena; the owner of the last survivor has the right to all the slain. The railway between Panama and Colon runs through a pestilential swamp, where travellers usually catch the fever. The construction of this line cost, it is calculated, a man per sleeper. The workmen used to commit suicide under the depression of labour in such circumstances. One morning seven Chinamen were found hanging on the same tree.



THE rivalry of Paris and Chicago over the question of their exhibitions is becoming fruitful of most exciting prospects. The world is already aware that Paris has determined on an exhibition for the year 1900, which is to leave next year's institution at Chicago completely in the shade. It is also known that, when a patriotic Chicagoan heard that one of the attractions of that exhibition was to be a monster telescope which would bring the moon within a yard of our vision, he instantly gave an order for a telescope for his city which would bring the moon, if possible, within half a yard. Paris, hearing of this vulgar piracy, the trick of a barren and unscrupulous imagination, dropped her telescope project with disdain, and now we learn from the *Revue des Inventions* of the project which is to take its place. It is nothing less than a model city built within the walls of the exhibition: not a reproduction from the past in pasteboard and stage properties, but a model city of the future, a realisation of the dream of those who believe it possible, with the aid of modern science and art and modern ideas of society, to construct for humanity a Paradise on this earth—a real city with real houses, real hotels, real streets and squares and fountains, and real inhabitants, and a model municipality of its own, and laws of property, labour, and general well-being which will make everyone living in it as happy as the day is long. Neopolis—that is to be its name—is to have between three and five thousand inhabitants, and it is to remain when the exhibition has passed away, so as to serve as a light and an exemplar to civilised humanity, a herald of the millennium—an object-lesson worth all the propagandism of dreamers and theorists!

CHICAGO will hardly pirate this idea. It is such a one as Paris alone, the city of the Feast of the Federation, could carry to triumph. The architects and engineers of France are to send in their designs, but, whether they go for suggestions to Antioch with its shaded ways and its grove of Daphne, or to Babylon with its villas, or to Chicago itself with its electric cars, it is clear that theirs will be the simplest part of it. Who will decide between the municipal systems of the rival economists? And who will be privileged to become the inhabitants of this blissful abode? A residence in Neopolis might be a reward for signal service to the State—a sort of *ante-mortem* beatification for just citizens. It would be better to be translated to Neopolis while living than to the Pantheon when dead. Every city in the future might have its Neopolis, and thus dispense with the old idea of a Heaven beyond the clouds. Men once tried a Tower of Babel; why not a rival Paradise? The idea leads us far—far! We shall watch for its realisation with awe.

IN MR. BELL SCOTT'S autobiography, which was published last week, there are some curious and charming letters of HOLMAN HUNT'S. They give a singular impression of the difficulties against which the pre-Raphaelite leader strove while painting his sacred pictures. Most of these difficulties he attributed to the evil one, "the Father of Mischief;" and in one letter he mentions, with perfect earnestness, an extraordinary incident which confirmed him in this view. He had gone to the studio on Christmas Day, a new idea having occurred to him for removing a twist that had come in the canvas, which was one of his troubles. He was entirely alone in the building, the other artists having studios being at home with their families. He was alone in that group of studios, "because of this terrible and doubtful struggle with the devil which one year before had brought me to the very portals of death," working with a candle held in his hand along with the palette. Would he be baffled again, as so often in like case at Jerusalem? He writes:—

"As I groaned over the thoughts of my pains . . . I gradually saw reason to think that it promised better, and I bent all my energies to

advance my work to see what the later crucial touches would do. I hung back to look at my picture. I felt assured that I should succeed. I said to myself, half-aloud, 'I think I have beaten the devil!' and stepped down, when the whole building shook with a convulsion, seemingly behind my easel, as if a great creature were shaking itself and running between me and the door. I called out, 'What is it?' but there was no answer, and the noise ceased. I went to the door, which was locked as I had left it, and I noticed that there was no sign of human or other creature being about. I went back to my work really rather cheered by the grotesque suggestion that came into my mind that the commotion was the evil one departing. . . . Thus you see what a child I am!"

The whole thing is weird and mediæval and something heroic. An artist on the look out for a subject might do worse than give us HOLMAN HUNT in the deserted studio on Christmas night, a candle stuck in his palette, wrestling against heart-breaking obstacles, and triumphing over the fiend who, he believed, had put them in his path.

WE regret to learn that, owing to the state of his health, MR. LOUIS FAGAN is about to retire from the British Museum after a connection with that institution which has extended over nearly a quarter of a century. Every visitor to the Print-Room knows MR. FAGAN, and has had reason to be grateful to him for the unfailing courtesy with which he has ever been ready to place his own remarkable knowledge of prints and drawings at the service of all who cared to avail themselves of it. As the biographer of PANIZZI, MR. FAGAN has a special place of his own in the official hierarchy at the Museum, where his loss will be severely felt.

THE operation of the law of compensation can be detected everywhere almost at a glance; it works with curious effect in the times and seasons of the publishers, always providing something as a nine-days' wonder. About this time last year two notable novels were the sensation of the hour; this year, in the absence of any book specially remarkable for its contents, we have "the most beautiful book" DR. FURNIVALL ever saw: "the most beautiful book ever printed!" and the craft of the binder for the moment eclipses that of the writer. It has been remarked, regarding the exquisite productions of MR. MORRIS'S Kelmscott Press, and more especially in respect of this "most beautiful" reprint of CAXTON'S "Recueil of the Historyes of Troye," that a revolution has begun in English printing. This is possible; but we think it also possible that the revolution may take a different course from that which the prophets anticipate. MR. MORRIS himself was one of the initiators of the revolution long before the Kelmscott Press was heard of. The strict lines on which printing and binding are to develop in this country have not necessarily been laid down by MR. MORRIS, but the idea which inspires his work will, we take it, be widely propagated, and every author who aspires to be more than a mere bookmaker will concern himself with the vesture of his book. A year or two ago it was suggested that books might be produced like pictures, the original manuscript, stamped in every letter with the impress of the author's personality, becoming the property of one fortunate DIVES, while LAZARUS and his kin contented themselves with printed copies, as they do at present with engravings of paintings. In the coming Utopian era some plan of this kind may be arranged, although there may be a difficulty then in finding your LAZARUS—or your DIVES either, for that matter; but before these rare times arrive we may look for a period when the type, the paper, and the binding of a book will be as essentially a part of the author's work as the text. Already many writers, including MR. WILLIAM MORRIS, MR. OSCAR WILDE, and MR. WALTER CRANE, take care to make their individuality apparent in the outward raiment of their thoughts.

If housekeepers are in earnest in wishing to benefit the unemployed in East London, they should buy BRYANT & MAY'S Matches, and refuse the foreign matches which are depriving the workers in East London of a large amount in weekly wages.

THE question as to how far an author may control the form in which his book shall appear is hardly raised by OUIDA's splenetic letter to *The Times*. We should say that fair-minded readers of that letter were all in MR. HEINEMANN'S favour before the appearance of his reply. OUIDA made a bargain with her eyes open, and regretting it for some cause or other, flung out hysterical aspersions against the dead and the living, and was very bitter indeed because MR. HEINEMANN, having the right to do so, elects to publish a book of hers in three volumes. Many people will wonder why it matters, apart from the price, in what form you sell chocolate cream—in bars, or balls.

WE seem unwittingly to have done an injustice to the *Athenæum*, for which we hasten to apologise. Referring to the fact that sixteen novels were reviewed in one article in that journal the other day, we spoke of the whole as being reviewed by one critic. This, however, is not the case. The criticisms of many writers were compressed into this one article. Happy the editor who can secure this homogeneity on the part of his staff!

ART circles in Germany and Scandinavia have been much agitated by some recent extraordinary proceedings in the Berlin Artists' Society. The Norwegian painter, MUNCH, undoubtedly the most "advanced" of Scandinavian impressionists, had been invited to exhibit his pictures in the said society at the instance of the famous Munich painter, UHDE. MUNCH'S pictures have always called forth a very considerable amount of hostile criticism, although he of course has his supporters and admirers. In Berlin he did not by any means meet with a flattering reception—quite the contrary, in fact—and some of the older painters went so far as to call a general meeting of the society for the purpose of censuring the standing committee in connection with the exhibition, which was to be forthwith closed. This resolution was carried, in an extremely stormy meeting, by 120 votes against 105. Upon this result becoming known, half the members of the committee forthwith resigned, and some eighty members asked to have their names removed from the books of the society. The "old ones" have for their leader M. ANTON WERNER, Director of the Academy, but several of the older painters, including such a celebrity as LUDWIG KNAUS, were against the resolution.

THE last volume of the new edition of "Chambers's Encyclopædia" approaches completion. The ten volumes of this most compact of encyclopædias contain more than thirty thousand articles from nearly a thousand writers, many of the contributors being at the head of their departments of knowledge. Among the writers in the concluding volume are MR. STANLEY LANE-POOLE, MR. F. T. PALGRAVE, SIR WILFRID LAWSON, MR. HAMERTON, MR. VAMBÉRY, and MR. SAINTSBURY.

BOOKS on India increase in number rapidly. A "History of India from the Earliest Times to the Present Day" is being prepared by MR. H. G. KEENE.

A FOURTH volume has been edited by MR. J. P. WALLIS for the new series of "State Trials" (EYRE & SPOTTISWOODE). It will contain FROST'S trial for high treason, and the trials of FEARGUS O'CONNOR, THOMAS COOPER, and others during the troublous times between 1839-43. Non-political trials of interest included are those of MR. MOXON for publishing SHELLEY'S "Queen Mab," and of LORD CARDIGAN before the House of Lords for his duel with CAPTAIN TUCKETT.

OF the remarkable comets that have visited our system, that discovered by BIELA is of the greatest interest. In the year of discovery, 1826, it was computed to have an elliptic orbit with a period of revolution of six and a half years. The next returns to perihelion, or, in other words, the next nearest approaches to the sun, took place as predicted in 1832 and 1839, but in 1845, although following the same path, the comet was found to be divided into two portions, the distance between them, as estimated in 1852, being a million miles. Since this time the twin comets have never appeared as such, but when the earth on November 27th, 1872, passed through the point where her orbit intersected that of the comet, a brilliant display of shooting stars occurred. The same phenomena occurred in 1885, and the point from which the meteors appeared to radiate, or the radiant point, was situated in the constellation of Andromeda. These meteors were no doubt remnants of the comet, since both their times of appearance and direction of motion were the same; but astronomers are still ever on the look-out to pick up the comet if it should by any chance return again. The recent announcement of a very bright comet situated in Andromeda created greater interest than usual owing to its possibly being the long-looked-for return mentioned above, but a careful computation from accurate observations has shown that the elements of the new comet's orbit are quite different. *Labor omnia vincit.*

AMONG the deaths announced since our last issue are those of the VERY REV. MARSHAM ARGLES, Dean of Peterborough, who had taken a prominent part in promoting the restoration of the Cathedral, and contributed largely towards the expenses; COLONEL MARTIN PETRIE, a military writer of distinction; BARON JACQUES REINACH, cousin and father-in-law of M. JOSEPH REINACH, and an eminent financier, whose sudden death just now has intensified the excitement over the Panama prosecutions in Paris, and given rise to various unfounded calumnies; and M. DUMONT, once Bishop of Tournai in Belgium, whose enforced resignation, and subsequent implication in an alleged robbery from the Episcopal Treasury, gave rise to a considerable scandal in 1882 and 1883.

#### THE RESULT OF THE ITALIAN ELECTIONS.

FLORENCE, November 17th.

THE result of the elections has been that which we foretold in our previous article. The Ministry has obtained an enormous majority, and, what is more, its chief and most formidable adversaries have not been re-elected. The newspapers estimate at about sixty the number of Radical deputies, but among these some twenty at least are men who would gladly support the Government. The Socialists have had divers successes in the country districts. At Milan, however, where they hoped to secure the seat for one of their candidates, they were completely defeated. The Right has sustained great losses. The chief among them is that of Bonghi, and a grave loss too has befallen the party of Nicotera. After all this it would appear that the life of the Ministry is secured, but there remains a serious unknown element, at which I hinted in my previous article, and already the leading newspapers are talking of a coalition between Crispi and Zanardelli, and perhaps Di Rudini, who shall take possession of power. I hold that for the present these rumours are premature.

The elections admit of no inference as to the political views that prevail throughout the country. Before all things there has been no true platform, no programme, either on the part of the Government or on the part of the Opposition. The Radical friends of the Government went about repeating that the Giolitti Ministry were crippled by



the Triple Alliance, which they had not renewed, and let it be understood that they would perchance not renew it when such renewal should again fall due. The Government on the one hand showed itself favourable to the Triple Alliance, on the other it manifested a keen desire to renew good relations with France, of which marked proof was given on the occasion of the Genoa fêtes.

Neither did the Opposition present a definite programme to the electors. While Colombo, the ex-Minister of Finance, who was the colleague of Di Rudini in his Ministry, was proclaiming at Milan the necessity of reducing the military expenditure, and of carrying on a more pacific policy, Di Rudini himself was putting forth a contrary opinion. Again: while Giolitti promised that the enormous Protectionist duty on rice should be definitely maintained, instead of being, as at present, merely provisional, his colleague Brin at Turin made Free Trade declarations which surprised all those who heard them. He estimated at some hundreds of millions the burden imposed on the country by Protection; and observed that there are some industries which receive by means of this Protection much more than what they pay in salaries to their workmen. So that if the scope of Protection be really to favour the national industries, a considerable sum would be saved by paying wages to the workmen and letting them live in idleness. And the Minister is right, but he recognises the truth a little late in the day. Already for the past two or three years political economists have been stating and restating this fact, and have published precise accounts to verify their statements. I myself published one some months ago in the *Journal des Économistes*, of Paris, from which it can be seen that Protection in the iron trade is the cause of great expense to the country, which rose to the large figure of £1,207,000 in 1890; and since the number of workmen engaged in this industry is 14,518, it follows that if this sum had been divided between them each would have had £83 a year, and instead statistics show that they only receive £36.

The abstentions have been numerous. The number of electors who in Italy go to vote is never very great. In the election of 1882 it was 60 per cent., in that of 1886 58 per cent., and in that of 1890 it was only 54 per cent. In the recent elections the voters were far fewer than in 1890. Partly this is due to the abstention of Clericals and Republicans; in a far greater degree to that of persons who are either quite indifferent, or who are disgusted with the corruption employed by the candidates, and by the pressure exercised by the present Government. Formerly, money played but a small part in the Italian elections, and it might be said that the buying of votes was quite exceptional. The statute book punishes bribery and corruption, but the law is hardly ever applied. On this occasion a number of ingenious methods were employed. In Italy we have paper money of the value of 4s. (5 lire); one candidate cut these in half, he gave one half to the elector and kept the other half himself, promising to give it to the man if he should be returned. The agents of another candidate accompanied the electors up to the door of the hall where the votes were taken, and gave to each a piece of blotting-paper, which he told him to place over the ballot-paper the moment he had written the name of the candidate, and then when he should hand back to him this piece of blotting-paper with the name of the candidate impressed on it, he should receive five or ten lire (4s. or 8s.). The banks and other companies which depend upon the Government provided large funds in order to meet these expenses.

The pressure exercised by the Government was such that even some of its friends saw themselves obliged to disapprove of it strongly. A great number of municipal councils were dissolved because they would not favour the official candidate. An amusing incident happened to the Marchese Berardi. This

rich proprietor gave £20,000 for the construction of a boarding school at Ceccano, in the province of Rome, and every year he has spent further large sums for the keeping-up of the school. Up to the present it was generally recognised that everything went on well in the establishment, and Martini, the Minister of Public Instruction, had even promised to come and visit the school. But the Marchese Berardi would not lend himself to favour the Government candidate. So, in lieu of Martini, there appeared a Government inspector charged to make a report of the school and to overhaul it. The joke is that when this functionary arrived he found himself confronted with another Government inspector, who was presiding over an examining commission, and was bestowing great encomiums on the management of the school. But this time the enormous pressure of the Government did not obtain the desired result, and the Government candidate was not elected. At Agnani some persons condemned by the tribunals, and to whom the royal pardon had been denied, obtained it when a magistrate came to be the candidate for the district. Still, it would be very difficult to decide whether the Giolitti Ministry has really acted much worse than its predecessors. By these methods the Government always obtains a great majority in Italy, but the mischief is that it is never possible to learn what the country really thinks or desires, for honest electors refrain more and more from going to the poll. Meanwhile, the financial situation is growing worse, and this is the dangerous rock ahead on which the Giolitti Ministry may suffer shipwreck, if it has not been overthrown before by Signor Crispi.

VILFREDO PARETO.

#### THE DIVISION OF THE BALKAN PENINSULA BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND RUSSIA.

CONSTANTINOPLE, November 16th.

THE discussion of Prince Bismarck's most recent utterance in regard to the Eastern Question has brought out once more the idea that it may be possible for Austria and Russia to agree to an amicable division of the Balkan Peninsula between themselves—in which case England and Italy would be the only powers interested in the defence of Constantinople.

It is not strange that a cold-blooded, cynical egotist like Bismarck should be ready to sacrifice Constantinople—or anything else which does not belong to him—to establish his own work or carry out his own plans; but it is quite time that intelligent men who discuss this subject should rid their minds of this old, exploded notion that the Balkan Peninsula can be divided between Austria and Russia. It is a plan which was once seriously entertained and which at one time influenced European statesmen—especially Austrian statesmen; but it is no longer regarded as a possible solution of the Eastern Question by those who have any knowledge of the subject.

Russia in Constantinople means Russia in possession of Roumania, Bulgaria, and Macedonia. What could be more absurd than to suppose that Russia would consent to hold Constantinople as a city in the air, without any land communication? And land communication does not mean a road or a right of way, but the possession of the intervening territory, including the absolute control of the Danube.

A glance at the map will satisfy anyone that this involves the annexation of Roumania and Bulgaria and the territory between Bulgaria and Constantinople. But it was once supposed that Austria might agree to all this on condition of being allowed to annex that part of Turkey lying between the Rhodope Range and the Adriatic, including at least Macedonia and Albania, and giving her the important port of Salonica. I do not know whether this plan